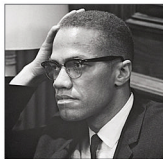




# ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MUSLIM- AMERICAN HISTORY

EDWARD E. CURTIS IV



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Edited by Edward E. Curtis IV

 **Facts On File**  
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Islam has always been a part of America's story. The first nation to recognize my country was Morocco. In signing the Treaty of Tripoli in 1796, our second President, John Adams, wrote, "The United States has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion or tranquility of Muslims." And since our founding, American Muslims have enriched the United States. They have fought in our wars, they have served in our government, they have stood for civil rights, they have started businesses, they have taught at our universities, they've excelled in our sports arenas, they've won Nobel Prizes, built our tallest building, and lit the Olympic Torch. And when the first Muslim American was recently elected to Congress, he took the oath to defend our Constitution using the same Holy Koran that one of our Founding Fathers—Thomas Jefferson—kept in his personal library.

Moreover, freedom in America is indivisible from the freedom to practice one's religion. That is why there is a mosque in every state in our union, and over 1,200 mosques within our borders. That's why the United States government has gone to court to protect the right of women and girls to wear the hijab and to punish those who would deny it.

So let there be no doubt: Islam is a part of America. And I believe that America holds within her the truth that regardless of race, religion, or station in life, all of us share common aspirations—to live in peace and security; to get an education and to work with dignity; to love our families, our communities, and our God. These things we share. This is the hope of all humanity.

*—President Barack Obama,  
speaking in Cairo, Egypt, June 4, 2009*



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# About the Editor



Edward E. Curtis IV is Millennium Chair of the Liberal Arts and professor of religious studies and American studies at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). He is the author or editor of several books on Muslim-American and African-American history, including *The Columbia Sourcebook of Muslims in the United States* and *Muslims in America: Short History*, which was named one of the best 100 books of 2009 by *Publishers Weekly*. A former NEH Fellow at the National Humanities Center, he has also been awarded Carnegie, Fulbright, and Mellon fellowships. Professor Curtis holds a doctorate in religious studies from the University of South Africa, a master's degree in history from Washington University in St. Louis, and a bachelor's degree in religion from Kenyon College.

# Acknowledgments



All academic work is a process of collaboration, but perhaps no academic work requires more collaboration than an encyclopedia. After two years of working with more than 130 people on this reference, I am left with a profound feeling of gratitude for their hard work, patience, and persistence. These colleagues deserve most of the credit for creating a work of scholarship that will help to open a new area of study in U.S. history for high school and college students, the general public, and professional scholars alike. Working for only token pay and asked to write multiple drafts of their entries, the writers in this volume truly exemplify the quest to seek knowledge for its own sake and for the betterment of human societies.

When Dr. Andrew Gyory, executive editor at Facts On File, Inc., approached me with the idea of becoming general editor of this encyclopedia, I first contacted Professor Richard Martin, a senior scholar in Islamic studies and editor of a large encyclopedia, for advice. Rich warned me about the perils of encyclopedia writing, but, naively, I jumped in anyway. It took me a year to figure out how to run the project efficiently.

In 2007, I wrote to a group of my peers, all published experts on some aspect of Muslim-American affairs, and asked them to advise me on the contents of the encyclopedia. These scholars, who became members of the Board of Advisers, included some of the most established names in the field and some relatively younger scholars with new ideas and approaches. I then composed a list of approximately 500 possible encyclopedia entries, and my advisers, along with Andrew Gyory, offered me counsel on what topics I had ignored and what topics could be excluded. Later, I drew up a list of 50 original documents to be included in the reference, and this group of scholars once again offered their advice. While these persons share no blame for misjudgments on my part, I am truly grateful for their model collegiality.

Many of the advisers also wrote entries themselves, suggested other possible authors, and offered their guidance to fellow contributors. I am especially grateful to Sally Howell, who became my *shaykha*, or guru, on all matters pertaining to Detroit, one of the most important sites of Muslim-American history. Sally answered questions and shared original sources and photographs from her own research. Her pioneering archival work has laid a more solid foundation for future research on the Arab-American and Muslim-American past.

Because much of the current research on Muslims in the United States focuses on contemporary affairs rather than Muslim-American history, finding authors for each of the entries was not always easy. I sent out hundreds of invitations—I stopped counting at one point—to nearly everyone who had published on some aspect of Muslim-American topics. Board members Kambiz GhaneaBassiri, Richard Brent Turner, Melani McAlister, and Marcia Hermansen put me in touch with some of their students, as did Judith Weisenfeld. On my behalf, Eva Sajoo at the Institute for Ismaili Studies in London recruited some talented scholars associated with the institute. Colleagues who are members of the History of American Religion and American Academy of Religion's Study of Islam Section listservs responded generously to my call for contributors. Bruce Burnside, William Brown, Jeff Diamant, and Natalia Slain wrote more than their fair share, and Sonja Spear deserves special mention for her contributions to the reference.

The first articles began to arrive in January 2008, and the last batch arrived in May 2009. Typically, the editorial process proceeded as follows: I read and edited each entry, usually sending the entry back to the author for revisions and queries. After the author had submitted a revised draft, I edited the piece again and forwarded it to Andrew Gyory for his comments. He suggested additional revisions, and then the entry

was returned to the author for a third draft. After the author was finished, I edited the piece once again and sent it back to Andrew. At times, the process went on for another round, and sometimes more, until Dr. Gyory accepted the entry. I am especially grateful to the authors for their patience and resolve in sticking with me through this sometimes frustrating process, which resulted in a work that has been as rigorously reviewed as most refereed academic research.

I thank Andrew Gyory for conceptualizing the project, inviting me to become general editor, and then offering me the assistance that I needed in completing it. His influence can be seen in the contents of each entry, and the reference is stronger for the debates that ensued between us over everything from word choice to article content. Andrew's hard work and sheer talent put him in a very elite class of editors in the publishing industry.

Unlike some of my other projects, the sheer size and organizational challenges of this one meant that it occupied more of my psychic space and emotional life than I would have liked. I am especially grateful to Regan Zwald for her patience and support. She listened to me, made valuable suggestions, and gave me strength during the summer of 2008—when few entries had been submitted and I was ready to give up. Our joint commutes to and from work became critical moments for me to reflect on the project.

From beginning to end, the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI offered an extraordinary level of institutional support and financial assistance for the project. Debbie Dale, administrative secretary for the Department of Religious Studies, helped me stay in touch with contributors, typed documents,

kept track of word counts, made library trips, and assisted in many other ways. The IUPUI University Library's inter-library loan staff was as essential as always, helping me to unearth rare documents for inclusion in the reference. The encyclopedia also benefited from the editorial assistance of Laura Jarrett and the photo editing of Aga Millhouse.

I want to thank all of the rights holders and authors who allowed their texts and images to be reprinted, especially Leila Ahmed, Ala Alryyes, Asma Gull Hasan, Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore, Wernor Sollors, the American Islamic Congress, J. Kelly Hayden of Fellowship Press, Nihad Awad of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Mahdi Bray of the Muslim American Society's Freedom Foundation, Omer Abdullah of *Islamic Horizons*, and Muzammil H. Siddiqi of the Fiqh Council of North America. Every effort has been made to trace copyright holders and give proper credit for all copyrighted material used in the reference. I regret any oversights. The publisher would be pleased to hear from any rights holders who have gone unacknowledged so that a correction can be made at the earliest possible opportunity.

All of the people mentioned here have made contributions toward the development of Muslim-American history, a new subfield of U.S. history that is likely to remain vital to the future of the United States for some time to come. My hope is that our collective efforts to unearth Muslim contributions to U.S. history help to create a new narrative of the past—one that is shared by Muslims and non-Muslims in the United States. Together, we have written a history through which Americans can recognize themselves in the reflection of difference.

# Introduction



History is a vital part of a people's identity. Though most Americans are not professional historians, they inevitably refer to the past as a way of determining who they are in the present. How people talk about history also influences their notion of "us" and "them." Americans may disagree over the meaning of their history, but even then, in the act of talking about the same events, they create a shared world of significance.

As a teacher of U.S. history, I know this from personal experience. Whether at the high school or college level, whenever I teach about the past, most of my American students inevitably use the word *we* to refer to something that Americans have done: *We* declared our independence from the British; *we* fought a civil war; and *we* supported civil rights.

Americans do not generally think of Muslims as part of that shared past. Muslim Americans, likely numbering between 3 million and 4 million people, though there may be as many as 6 million, are seen as new, as foreign, "fresh off the boat." The mainstream media, especially in places such as New York and Los Angeles, where there are so many first-generation Muslim Americans, often perpetuate this image. Their headlines too often depict the Muslim-American experience as something completely new. Some first-generation Muslim Americans talk about fellow Muslim Americans in the same way, often forgetting about the long history of Muslims in the United States. Scholars of Islam in America also perpetuate the image of Muslims as quintessential foreigners by sometimes producing scholarship that frames Muslim-American life as a constant series of tensions between traditional and modern life.

This encyclopedia offers a very different vision of Muslim America. It says: Muslims are not new to the United States. They have been here since before the nation was created. Their story is the American story. Like every other group of people, they are not angels or demons but ordinary (and

sometimes extraordinary) human beings who have shaped the unfolding of American history. Their contributions to American society are not only religious in nature but also political, social, and economic.

The first significant population of Muslims to arrive on American shores came as slaves, abducted from West Africa in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Muslim slaves such as the 18th-century celebrity Job Ben Solomon (ca. 1701–ca. 1773) were sometimes literate, fluent in the Arabic language that had been taught to them in West African Muslim schools and seminaries. Their writings in both English and Arabic are among the most important slave narratives in existence, documenting the history of the United States as a diverse, vibrant, and oppressive slave society in the 19th century. It has been estimated that at least 20,000 African-American Muslim slaves gave their labor to the building of the American economy before 1865. Like other West African slaves brought to the Americas, they also contributed their religious cultures, music, art, and agricultural know-how to the building of a multicultural America.

Since the beginning of the republic, Muslims have also fought in every major U.S. war as members of the U.S. military—and they have sometimes been among the most vocal critics of war. Muslim slaves and freedmen such as Corporal Bampett Muhamed of Virginia served during the American Revolution, and Bilali of Sapelo Island (ca. 1760–1859) was an overseer who led a group of armed slaves charged with defending the Georgia seacoast during the War of 1812. Muslims served on both sides of the Civil War, and thousands of them fought in World War I and World War II. In addition to serving in the Vietnam War, Muslim Americans such as boxing champion Muhammad Ali (1942– ) were among the war's most vocal and effective critics. More recently, most Muslim Americans opposed the Iraq War that began in 2003,

though many Muslim members of the U.S. armed forces have given their lives or been injured in the conflict.

Muslim-American history is also an essential aspect of the larger history of U.S. immigration. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a period marked by a large influx of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, thousands of Muslim Americans were among those from Europe and the Middle East who came to the United States to seek their fortunes and, they hoped, to return home. Many did not, especially when travel to and from Europe was cut off during World War I. Some Muslim immigrants became dockworkers in the area around Boston, Massachusetts; others started out as peddlers in the Midwest; hundreds or more worked in Detroit's burgeoning automobile industries. In North Dakota, Muslim immigrants from Syria and Lebanon applied for homesteads and busted the hard sod of the American Plains, often deciding, with other Dakotans in the 1930s, that such land was not meant to be cultivated. During this period, sailors from South Asia also arrived in the ports of New Orleans and New York City, where they often escaped from their work as steam engine stokers, married women of color, and remained in the United States.

After the Immigration Act of 1965 repealed the quotas that restricted immigration from Asia and Africa, approximately 1 million Muslims came to the United States over the next three decades. These new immigrants, many of whom were from the Middle East and South Asia, made vital contributions to various aspects of American life, from poetry to politics. South Asian-American Muslims, for example, designed some of the country's most noteworthy buildings, including the Sears (now Willis) Tower in Chicago; they healed the sick as medical doctors in small towns and large cities; and some introduced Americans to Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam whose forms of meditation have become popular among millions of Americans, whether Muslim or not. Arab-American Muslims made similar contributions, and one of them, Ahmed Zewail (1946– ), won the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1999.

One of the consequences of the post-1965 wave of immigration was that the United States became the most religiously and ethnically diverse Muslim country in the world. In addition to South Asians and Arab Americans, the newly arrived Muslims included people from sub-Saharan Africa, Iran, Southeast Asia, southeastern Europe, and Latin America. They introduced their food and dress to Muslims and non-Muslims in the United States, often achieving success as small business owners who attempted to popularize some aspect of their culture among their fellow Americans.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, many of these immigrants faced increasing discrimination, and their central role in controversies regarding immigration policy,

civil liberties, and other aspects of U.S. politics showed how Muslims had a symbolic importance in American society that exceeded their actual numbers. In many ways, this pattern recapitulated an old theme. Stereotypes of Islam and Muslims, as this encyclopedia also reveals, have been part of American culture and politics since the colonial era.

Though this work includes coverage of Muslim-American religious life, religious groups and leaders, mosques and Islamic centers, and religious practices such as prayer, it is not an encyclopedia of Islamic religion in the United States. Instead, this reference concentrates on Americans who happen to be Muslim. Religion is an essential part of any comprehensive understanding of Muslim Americans, but it is not the whole story. Focusing on Muslim-American history also means examining the biographies of Muslims who are not religiously observant. Even more important, it means understanding how Muslim-American individuals, groups, and organizations have shaped the nation's political, economic, and social history, and how, in turn, larger historical forces have shaped them.

As a work of historical scholarship, the encyclopedia adopts an inclusive definition of Muslim identity. It avoids taking sides in disputes among Muslim Americans over religious doctrine. If an American figure or a group has identified itself as Muslim, the first question the authors and editors asked was, "How is this figure or group important to U.S. history?" We were curious, not judgmental. We wanted to know what it meant for that person to call himself or herself a Muslim and how that Muslim's religious orientation was similar to and different from other Muslims'. As a result, the encyclopedia reveals the enormous religious diversity of Muslim Americans. There are entries on Sunni Muslim Americans and Shi'a Muslim Americans, over a dozen different Sufi groups, the Five Percenters, and others.

Remaining neutral in intra-Muslim religious disputes was particularly important to capturing the critical role played by African-American Muslims in U.S. history. The growth of various Muslim-American communities and their impact on American society during the 20th century depended largely on the conversion of thousands of African Americans to differing forms of Islam from 1920 to 1945. These conversions resulted in the creation of numerous African-American Muslim groups, including the Moorish Science Temple of America, the Nation of Islam, and the Addeynu Allahe Universal Arabic Association. Such groups were often similar in their various approaches to fighting racism but very different in their understanding of Islamic thought and shari'a, or Islamic law and ethics.

No matter their particular religious orientations, black Muslims have had an enormous impact on U.S. history. African-American Muslims have been in the United States

the longest of any Muslim ethnic or racial group. For much of U.S. history, Muslims of African descent have been either the plurality or the majority of Muslim Americans, depending on which era of U.S. history is under examination. Even after the massive influx of Muslim immigrants from the Middle East and South Asia after 1965, black Muslim Americans still accounted for 20 percent to 35 percent of all Muslim Americans during the first decade of the 21st century.

It is hard to imagine recent American history without Malcolm X (1925–65) or the Million Man March. African-American Muslims have also made their mark in the list of Muslim-American “firsts.” For example, African-American religious leaders Siraj Wahhaj (1950– ) and W. D. Mohammed (1933–2008) were the first two Muslim Americans to offer prayers before sessions of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. In the 21st century, African-American politicians Keith M. Ellison (1963– ) and André D. Carson (1974– ) became the first two Muslim Americans elected to the U.S. Congress.

But it would be wrong to conclude from these comments that African Americans are the focus of this work. They are a vital part of it, but still just a part. One of the innovative features of this encyclopedia is that every topic in Muslim-American history is presented with an eye toward the racial and ethnic diversity of Muslim Americans. Thematic entries on agriculture, education, families, holidays, philanthropy, the Internet, and other aspects of Muslim-American life are unprecedented in their inclusion of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups of Muslims.

Nearly 130 historians and other scholars have written 280 entries for this reference, making it the largest collaborative study of the Muslim-American experience yet produced. Every article provides sources for further reading and research. In addition to the biographies of Muslim Americans and entries on Muslim-American groups, the encyclopedia offers information on Muslim-American participation in major historical events, such as the Columbian Exposition of 1893 (the Chicago World’s Fair); critical court cases, such as *Fulwood v. Clemmer* (1962); important sectors of the U.S. economy, such as health care; and familiar organizations, such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. It charts the influence of Muslim Americans on cities such as Atlanta and Cleveland and Muslim-American contributions to American jazz, film, poetry, and hip-hop.

One of the other special features of the encyclopedia is its inclusion of 50 historical documents, many of which are essential, if underappreciated, sources for understanding U.S. history. Placed strategically after corresponding entries, these original documents include autobiographies, interviews, newspaper articles, poems, letters, advertisements, speeches, a children’s story, and an excerpt from a once-clas-

sified FBI file. They help to depict, largely in the words of Muslim Americans themselves, everything from the life of African-American Muslim slaves to the feelings of Muslim Americans after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

These original documents also include archival sources that are either being published for the first time or have been rescued from a little-used reel of microfilm hidden away in a library drawer. Some non-Muslim writings, also essential to capturing Muslim-American history, are here too. There is an 1828 letter from Secretary of State Henry Clay about African-American Muslim slave Abdul Rahman Ibrahima’s quest for freedom and an 1893 article from the *Chicago Tribune* describing the crowd’s reaction when a Muslim imam, or religious leader, offered the invocation before Independence Day ceremonies at the World’s Fair. Also included are oral histories of Muslim Americans conducted in the 1930s by the Federal Writers’ Project of the Works Progress Administration, documenting the lives of both 19th-century African-American slaves and early 20th-century Arab-American immigrants.

In addition to these vital primary sources, the encyclopedia features the most comprehensive chronology of Muslim-American history ever published. This chronology should be especially helpful to students, teachers, community activists, and others who wish to incorporate Muslims into their understanding of U.S. history. It details obscure events, such as the 1803 conversion of white Americans to Islam during the course of the First Barbary War, the 1847 escape of Muslim slave and sailor Mahommah Baquaqua from his captors at the port of New York, and the 1910 arrival of Inayat Khan, the Sufi missionary and Hindustani musician who toured America. It also charts the opening of mosques in Boston, Massachusetts; Detroit, Michigan; and Ross, North Dakota. More well-known happenings, such as the death of Elijah Muhammad in 1975, are noted as are cultural milestones such as *Life* magazine’s 1948 cover story on Muslim jazz artists and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar’s retirement from the National Basketball Association with the most points of any player in history. The encyclopedia also contains dozens of historical illustrations and photographs that help readers better imagine the people, events, and places that are part of the Muslim-American past. Finally, it concludes with a master bibliography, perhaps the most definitive compilation of published sources on Muslim-American history.

As a whole, the articles, original documents, chronology, and images make it possible to recover the essential role of Muslims in U.S. history and to incorporate them into our common notion of who we are as Americans. Such a task is critical in our age. By conjuring these American ancestors and unearthing our shared past, the *Encyclopedia of Muslim-American History* provides us all with new memories of who we have been and new hopes for what we might become.

# Note on Transliteration



For centuries, Muslims and non-Muslims alike have introduced various Islamic terms, many of which are from Arabic, into the English language. Because Arabic uses a different alphabet than English does, however, Arabic terms must be transliterated into English—that is, Latin or Roman letters must be used in place of the Arabic letters.

Unfortunately, there is no one system of transliteration accepted by everyone. Scholars of Islam and the Middle East generally use a system outlined in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. This encyclopedia uses a simplified form of that scholarly standard meant to be easily accessible to the general reader. The only confusing aspect of the scheme is that there are two letters in Arabic that do not have Latin or Roman equivalents. One of these letters, the *ayn*, is represented in this publication by a single open quotation mark, as in the word *shari‘a*. The other letter, the *hamza*, is represented by an apostrophe, as in the word *Qur’an*.

There is one major exception to this general approach. When a person, place, or thing has become widely known by an alternative name in English—such as Damascus (instead of Dimashq) or Gamal Abdel Nasser (rather than Jamal Abd an-Nasir)—the encyclopedia uses the well-known English name.



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# Chronology



## Before 1492

- According to some speculative theories, Muslim explorers from Africa arrive in the Americas.

## 1492

- Christopher Columbus arrives in the Americas, probably carrying Muslims or former Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula aboard one of his ships.

## 1510

- African slaves are transported to the Americas.

## 1527

- Estevanico, a slave from Morocco, sets sail for the Americas and a year later probably becomes one of the first Muslims to set foot on mainland North America.

## Late 1500s

- Common Muslim-sounding names such as Hassan, Osman, Amar, Ali, and Ramadan appear in Spanish-language colonial documents.

## 1625–1626

- African slaves begin to arrive in New Netherland (New York); burial grounds discovered in 1991 in New York City indicate that at least some Muslims were present in the colonial era.

## 1711–1808

- An estimated 30,000 Muslim slaves from West Africa arrive in the thirteen colonies and the United States; far greater numbers of Muslims are captured and taken to Latin America.

## 1730

- Job Ben Solomon, or Hyuba, Boon Salumena Jallo, a Muslim religious leader from Gambia in West Africa, is sold into slavery by a rival ethnic group and lands in Annapolis, Maryland.

## 1733

- Impressed by Job Ben Solomon's literacy and education, British parliamentarian and founder of Georgia James Oglethorpe purchases Job's bond, with funds raised by others. Job travels to England, is feted by British nobles, and later returns home to Gambia to work on behalf of English traders.

## 1734

- Thomas Bluett, who was a shipmate of Job Ben Solomon's on the voyage from America to England, publishes *Some Memoirs of the Life of Job*, dubbed by one scholar to be "the first text in African American literature."

## 1753

- Muslim slaves Abel Condor and Mahamut petition South Carolina colonial authorities in Arabic for their freedom.

## 1765

- Thomas Jefferson purchases a translation of the Qur'an while studying law at the College of William and Mary; the translation by British scholar George Sale is entitled *The Koran, Commonly Called the Alcoran of Mohammed*.

## 1774

- George Washington pays taxes on two slaves, a mother and daughter pair named Fatimer and Little Fatimer, indicating the possible presence of Muslims on his plantation, Mt. Vernon.

**1775–1783**

- In Virginia, Bampett Muhamed serves as a corporal in the Continental army during the American Revolution.

**1781**

- Sambo Anderson, a slave on George Washington's Mt. Vernon plantation and probably a Muslim, escapes when the British warship *Savage* anchors in the Potomac River and steals provisions from the estate. Though forcibly returned to Mt. Vernon, he is later freed in Washington's will.

**1788**

- Abdul Rahman Ibrahima, a Muslim noble and military leader from modern-day Guinea, is enslaved and brought to Natchez, Mississippi.

**1794–1795**

- Abdul Rahman Ibrahima marries a fellow slave, Isabella, who is a Baptist. He remains a Muslim.

**1796**

- Lamen Kebe, a teacher in modern-day Guinea, is captured, sold into slavery, and transported to the United States.

**1800**

- Freed after decades of enslavement to the Bealle family in Maryland, Guinean Muslim-American Yarrow Mamout buys a house and property in Dent Place, located in the Georgetown section of Washington, D.C.

**1801**

- President Thomas Jefferson rejects the demands of the Barbary States of Algiers, Tripoli, Morocco, and Tunis for tribute (protection money) against piracy and in the United States's first foreign war sends the U.S. Navy to Tripoli, in modern-day Libya.

**1802**

- West African Muslim slave Bilali Mahomet, also known as Ben Ali, Belali Mahomet, and Bu Allah, is purchased by Thomas Spaulding, owner of a large plantation on Sea Island, Georgia.

**1803**

- During the First Barbary War, the USS *Philadelphia* runs aground outside of Tripoli, and 300 sailors are captured and held for ransom. In some of the earliest examples of Americans converting to Islam, five of them “turn Turk”—which for many Americans is interpreted as “disgracing the flag.”

**1807**

- Omar ibn Said, a Muslim soldier and scholar from Senegal, is captured and transported to Charleston, South Carolina, just one year before the United States outlaws the international slave trade.

**1810–1813**

- According to the U.S. consul in Algiers, an American sailor from Baltimore named Walker abandons “his country, his family, and religion” to live with the Muslim “horde of barbarians,” representing another early conversion to Islam.

**1811**

- James Owen, brother of North Carolina's former governor, purchases Omar ibn Said, who becomes known over the following four decades for writing various manuscripts, including passages from the Qur'an, in Arabic.

**1812**

- During the War of 1812, John Hamin serves as a corporal in the Fourth Company of the Virginia Militia, and Bilali Mahomet leads a group of armed slaves tasked with defending Sapelo Island against British invasion.

**1819**

- American painter Charles Willson Peale completes a portrait of African-American Muslim Yarrow Mamout, which is later called one of the few sensitive portraits of an African American in the antebellum period.

**1823**

- Yarrow Mamout dies in Georgetown and, according to his obituary, “was interred in the corner of his garden, the spot where he usually resorted to pray.”

**1828**

- In Washington, D.C., Abdul Rahman Ibrahima, who penned a letter in Arabic asking his father for help in gaining his freedom, meets Secretary of State Henry Clay. Acting on behalf of President John Quincy Adams, Clay offers to purchase Ibrahima's freedom and transport him to Africa. Ibrahima sets out on a nationwide tour to raise the funds necessary to free his wife and children.

**1829**

- In Norfolk, Virginia, Abdul Rahman Ibrahima sails with his wife, Isabella, for Liberia.

**1831**

- Omar ibn Said, a Muslim slave in North Carolina, writes the only known Arabic-language autobiography in the history of American slave narratives.

**1834**

- Novelist William Caruthers includes a translation of the Fatiha, the first chapter of the Qur'an, written by an African-American Muslim slave named Charno in *The Kentuckian in New York*, a semiautobiographical novel.

**1835**

- Former slave Lamén Kebe returns to Africa, first landing in Liberia, then moving to Sierra Leone.

**1847**

- After his ship docks in New York City, Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua, a Brazilian Muslim slave originally from West Africa, escapes to freedom.

**1848**

- Theodore Dwight, Jr., founder of the American Ethnological Society and an advocate of the movement to transport black Americans to Africa, arranges for part of Omar ibn Said's Arabic manuscripts to be translated into English.

**1854**

- Samuel Moore and Mahommah Baquaqua publish the *Biography of Mahommah G. Baquaqua, a Native of Zooloo, in the Interior of Africa*, one of the most significant English-language biographies of a former Muslim-American slave.

**1856**

- Hajji Ali, a camel driver from the Middle East, is recruited by the U.S. military to explore the use of camels as a mode of transport in territory recently acquired from Mexico in what becomes the southwestern United States.

**1857**

- Omar ibn Said pens his last known Arabic manuscript. Asked to write the Christian Lord's Prayer, he reproduces Sura al-Nasr, the Qur'anic chapter entitled "Victory," and signs: "My name is Omar."

**1859**

- Bilali Mahomet gives a rare 13-page Arabic manuscript to Presbyterian minister Francis R. Goulding; scholars are still trying to determine its origins and meanings.

**1861–1865**

- Some 292 Muslim-sounding last names appear in troop listings for the Civil War; at least 10 fight in the Confederate Army, and four serve in the Union Army. In the Union Army, the highest-ranked Muslim officer is Captain Moses Osman, who serves with the 104th Illinois Infantry. The first person with a Muslim last name buried in a national military cemetery is W. B. Osman (no known relation to Moses Osman), who dies in 1865 and is interred in Poplar Grove National Cemetery, Petersburg, Virginia.

**1863**

- Nicholas Said, also known as Mohammed Ali ben Said, joins the 55th Regiment of Massachusetts Colored Volunteers; he is discharged as a sergeant in 1865.

**1869–1898**

- 20,690 "Asian Turks," including Muslims from the Middle East, legally immigrate to the United States.

**1873**

- Nicholas Said publishes his autobiography, chronicling his enslavement in West Africa and travels, with various masters, across North Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and South America. In addition to documenting his pilgrimage to Mecca and forced conversion to Russian Orthodox Christianity, Said provides a valuable description of the South during the era of Reconstruction.

**1880**

- Hajji Ali, a former camel driver for the U.S. Army, becomes a naturalized U.S. citizen and changes his name to Philip Tedro.

**1882**

- Congress passes the Chinese Exclusion Act, banning the immigration of all Chinese laborers, including Chinese Muslims, and rendering those already in the United States ineligible for citizenship.

**1886**

- Dusé Mohamed Ali, a Shakespearean actor from Egypt, tours the United States as part of Wilson Barrett's acting troupe.

**1891**

- Congress, as part of its larger campaign to suppress the growth of Mormonism and its countercultural practices, passes a law banning the immigration of polygamists to the United States.

**1893**

- Former U.S. consul to the Philippines and Muslim convert Alexander Russell Webb represents Islam at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago. He also publishes *Islam in America* and establishes a Muslim mission called the American Islamic Propaganda in Manhattan.
- *July 4*: Jamal Effendi, a Muslim imam, or religious leader, offers the invocation before Independence Day celebrations at the Columbian Exposition, or World's Fair, in Chicago; foreign and immigrant Muslim workers present at the fair shout "Allahu Akbar!" ("God is great!") as the U.S. flag is displayed.
- *December 11*: The *adhan*, or Muslim call to prayer, is delivered by John Lant, cofounder of First Society for the Study of Islam in America, from the third-story window of the Union Square Bank building in New York City.

**1903**

- Charles Juma is born to Hassin and Mary Juma, who, according to his mother, is "the first Syrian [and Muslim] child born in western North Dakota."

**1906–1907**

- Bosnian Muslims, who referred to themselves as Bosniacs, establish the Benevolent Society of Illinois in Chicago.

**1907**

- President Theodore Roosevelt advises U.S. courts that South Asians—all of whom were called "Hindoos" at the time—should not be considered "free white persons" and thus are not eligible for naturalized U.S. citizenship.
- Lithuanian, Polish, and Russian Muslims settle in the Williamsburg area of Brooklyn, New York; some may have established the American Mohammedan Society.

**1908**

- In Seattle, members of the Druze community found the first Druze-American organization, called Albakourat al-Durzeyat, or "First Fruit of the Druze."

**1910**

- Inayat Khan, Indian musician and Sufi Muslim religious teacher, begins performances and lectures across the United States.
- In addition to Turks, Arabs, and others from the former Ottoman Empire, the U.S. Census records the presence of South Asians in the United States, including men who live in a New Orleans boarding house located on historic Congo Square.

**1911**

- Duse Mohamed Ali publishes the American edition of *In the Land of Pharaohs*, which criticizes former president Theodore Roosevelt's comments that Egyptians could be ruled only through violence.

**1912**

- Inayat Khan leaves the United States, saying that the time is "not yet ripe" for the spread of his Sufi message; he takes his American wife, Ora Ray Baker, with him to Europe.

**1913**

- Noble Drew Ali (Timothy Drew) is said to have established the Canaanite Temple, a precursor to the Moorish Science Temple, in Newark, New Jersey.

**1914**

- *Al-Bayan*, an Arabic-language newspaper run by members of the Druze community, publishes an article about the trend of Syrian immigrant men dating and marrying American-born white women.
- Henry Ford offers \$5 per day to workers at his Highland Park automobile assembly line, making work there even more attractive to Detroit's Middle Eastern and southeastern European immigrants.

**1915**

- In *Dow v. United States*, the U.S. Court of Appeals rules that "the inhabitants of a portion of Asia, including Syria, were to be classed as white persons," making non-Chinese Asians, including Muslims, eligible for immigration.
- Albanian Muslim immigrants in Biddeford, Maine, may have used the Peppermell Counting House as a mosque.

**1916**

- According to the sociological department of the Ford Motor Company, 555 Arab men are now employed as autoworkers.

**1917**

- The Immigration Act of 1917 extends the Chinese Exclusion Act, banning the immigration of Asians from Arabia, South Asia, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia.
- *December 8*: 500 people protest Great Britain's declaration of support for the creation of a Jewish national home in Palestine; the demonstration, sponsored by the Palestine Antizionism Society and the Ramallah Young Men's Society, is held at the Bossert Hotel in Brooklyn, New York.



**1917–1918**

- Some 13,965 Syrian Americans, including Muslims from across the country, serve in the American Expeditionary Force in World War I. According to one estimate, 5,470 possible or likely Muslim names appear in war records. Muhammad, the most popular, is spelled 41 different ways.

**1918**

- The Moslem Brotherhood Association of Worcester, Massachusetts, buys 200 grave plots for resale to Muslim families in New England.

**1920**

- In Detroit, Sait Machit, a Sudanese man, purchases 300 grave plots in Roselawn Cemetery on behalf of other local Turks, Arabs, and Kurds who are members of Kizilay, a Muslim funeral association.
- In Chicago, Turks, Bosnians, and Kurds, all speakers of Turkish, sustain ethnic enclaves with lodges, pool halls, and coffeehouses, where some of them drink beer and sing Turkish love songs together to the accompaniment of Turkish musicians.
- *February 15*: Muhammad Sadiq, a missionary from the Ahmadiyya Muslim reform movement in India, is arrested upon his arrival in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on the charge of being “a representative of a religion that practiced polygamy.”
- *October 20*: After being released, Muhammad Sadiq establishes a Muslim mission in Chicago.

**1921**

- Muhammad Sadiq, Hussien Karoub, and Kalil Bazy are among the Muslim-American leaders present for the opening of one of America’s first mosques, located just blocks away from Ford’s automobile assembly plant in Highland Park, an area of Detroit.
- Ahmadi Muslim missionary Muhammad Sadiq, with the help of other Muslim Americans, founds the *Muslim Sunrise*, the first successful English-language Muslim periodical in the United States.
- Sudanese missionary Satti Majid ministers to Yemeni sailors who had been stranded in New York City during the course of World War I.

**1922**

- Duse Mohamed Ali, the author of *In the Land of Pharaohs* and editor of the anticolonial journal *African Times and Orient Review*, is named head of the African Affairs Division of Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and writes a column on foreign affairs for the UNIA’s newspaper, *The Negro World*.

**1923**

- African-American Ahmadi Muslim leader Ahmad Din (P. Nathaniel Johnson) supervises the conversion of Wali Akram (Walter Gregg) to Islam in St. Louis, Missouri.

**1924**

- The National Origins Act severely restricts immigration from “non-Nordic” countries, limiting immigration from southern and eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. While the number of Muslim immigrants probably declines, nonwhite people use both legal and illegal means to continue coming to the United States.
- Ackmed Abdullah writes the screenplay for the film *The Thief of Bagdad*, an adaptation of the *Arabian Nights*.
- Arab-American Muslims join the Modern Age Arabian Islamic Society in Michigan City, Indiana.

**1925**

- The Moorish Science Temple of America, one of the first indigenous African-American Muslim groups, is founded by Noble Drew Ali in Chicago.
- In Detroit, Duse Mohamed Ali, Shah Zain ul-Abdein, Joseph Ferris, and S. Z. Abedian establish the Universal Islamic Society, also known as the Central Islamic Society, an interethnic Sunni Muslim religious group.
- Syrian and Lebanese Muslims in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, form the Rose of Fraternity Lodge and rent space in which to conduct Friday congregational prayers.

**1927**

- Noble Drew Ali publishes *The Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple*, a scripture filled largely with excerpts from American metaphysical texts.

**1928**

- The Ahmadiyya movement leadership in India appoints Sufi Bengalee as their new missionary to the United States.
- Sudanese missionary Satti Majid establishes a following of both immigrant and indigenous Muslims in Pittsburgh.

**1929**

- Noble Drew Ali is found dead in his Chicago apartment, perhaps the victim of murder by the police or religious rivals.
- Muslims in Ross, North Dakota, erect a simple post-and-beam mosque, which resembles a small granary or other outbuilding.
- Juanita Mayo Richardson-Bey is managing editor of the *Moorish Guide*, the Moorish Science Temple newspaper.

- *September 9*: In a meeting with Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson, the Young Men's Moslem Association, an organization led by Abd M. Kateeb, joins the Palestine National League and the New Syria Party to request self-determination for Palestinians.

### 1930

- African-American Ahmadi leader Wali Akram and Ahmadi missionary Abul M. Fazl establish an Ahmadi mosque in Cleveland, Ohio.
- W. D. Fard creates the Temple of Islam—later known as the Nation of Islam—in Paradise Valley, Detroit's largest African-American neighborhood.

### 1931

- After the failure of various business ventures in Detroit, St. Louis, and New York, writer and editor Dusé Mohamed Ali leaves the United States for Lagos, Nigeria, where he becomes an elder statesman of pan-African movements.
- Muhammad Ezaldeen (James Lomax), once a leader of the Moorish Science Temple, arrives in Cairo, Egypt, where he studies Islam under the guidance of the General Centre World Young Men Muslim Association.
- At the request of Sudanese missionary Satti Majid, al-Azhar University, the most prestigious seminary in the Sunni Muslim world, issues a fatwa (or religious opinion), in both English and Arabic, condemning the teachings of Noble Drew Ali's Moorish Science Temple as un-Islamic.

### 1932

- In Detroit, the Nation of Islam opens the first known Muslim parochial school, dubbed the "University of Islam," in the United States.
- Followers of Satti Majid in Pittsburgh write to him in Cairo seeking translations of religious literature.

### 1934

- Syrian-Lebanese Muslims in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, move into a purpose-built mosque called the "Mother Mosque of America."
- Nation of Islam founder W. D. Fard disappears, and Elijah Muhammad steps in as leader of the movement. He leads the Nation of Islam for 41 years until his death in 1975.

### 1936

- Syrian-Lebanese religious leader Hussien Karoub, a local Muslim leader in Detroit with regional appeal and connections, begins publication of *Islamic Unity*, a bilingual newspaper in Arabic and English.

### 1937

- Cleveland Muslim leader Wali Akram breaks away from the Ahmadi movement, adopting Sunni Islamic teachings and advocating the development of a "Muslim Ten Year Plan," a nonprofit organization designed to encourage religious and economic revival among African Americans.
- Syrian-Lebanese Muslims in Quincy, Massachusetts, organize the Arab American Banner Society, which represents the ideals of Arab unity and cohesion in the face of colonialism.
- The Progressive Arabian Hashemite Society, a Shi'a mosque led by Kalil Bazy, opens its doors on Dix Avenue in Dearborn, outside of Detroit.

### 1938

- The Addeynu Allahe Universal Arabic Association, an African-American Sunni Muslim organization, is established by Muhammad Ezaldeen in Camden, New Jersey, and West Valley, New York.
- Hussien Karoub starts the American Moslem Society, a Sunni mosque, in Dearborn, Michigan.

### 1939

- Daoud Ahmed Faisal, leader of the Islamic Mission of America, leases a brownstone at 143 State Street in Brooklyn Heights, New York.

### Late 1930s

- Interviewers employed by the Works Progress Administration conduct oral history interviews with Muslim farmers in the Midwest and the descendants of Muslim slaves along the Georgia seacoast, among other ethnic minorities.

### 1941–1945

- During World War II, at least 1,500 Muslim Americans, including Arab Americans, African Americans, and South Asian Americans, serve in the U.S. military.

### 1942

- Many members of the Moorish Science Temple, the Nation of Islam, Peace Movement of Ethiopia, and other African-American groups sympathetic toward the Empire of Japan, refuse to register for the military draft. FBI investigations lead to a systematic arrest of 25 black leaders, including Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad, on suspicion of sedition.

### 1943

- African-American Sunni Muslim leaders Wali Akram, Daoud Ahmed Faisal, and Muhammad Ezaldeen meet in Philadelphia, creating the Uniting Islamic Society of America, a black Sunni organization meant to unite their



various local and regional communities; organization falters by 1946.

- After Elijah Muhammad is convicted of draft evasion—rather than sedition—and is sent to prison in Michigan, Clara Muhammad, his wife, becomes his chief lieutenant, attempting to ensure that ministers in the Nation of Islam carry out their imprisoned leader's instructions.
- Ibrahim Choudry becomes director of the British Merchant Sailors' Club for Indian Seamen in New York, inviting Muslims to conduct Friday congregational prayers and celebrate Muslim holidays on premises.

#### 1946

- The Luce-Celler Act grants the rights of citizenship to South Asian Americans and Filipino Americans.
- Approximately 40 members of the Addeynu Allahe Universal Arabic Association in West Valley, New York, live on and farm a total of 462 acres in a community they call Jabul Arabiyya, the "Mountain of Arabic-Speaking People."

#### 1947

- Ahmet Ertegun, son of a Turkish diplomat, cofounds Atlantic Records in New York City.

#### 1947–1948

- Malcolm Little, imprisoned in Massachusetts for a theft conviction, converts to Islam, declaring his allegiance to the "Honorable Elijah Muhammad, Messenger of Allah" and changing his name to Malcolm X.

#### 1948

- *Life* magazine publishes an article about the conversion of jazz artists to Islam, featuring a photo of Dizzy Gillespie on his knees, praying toward Mecca. Gillespie later says that *Life* "tricked me into committing a sacrilege . . . because I wasn't Muslim."

#### 1949

- Vehbi Ismail, an Albanian religious scholar trained at Egypt's al-Azhar University, leads the Albanian Moslem Society of greater Detroit.
- Hard bop jazz drummer Art Blakey, also known as Abdullah Ibn Buhaina, founds the group Jazz Messengers.
- Lebanese Shi'a religious scholar Mohamad Jawad Chirri arrives in Detroit to lead the Islamic center, quickly gaining stature as a national Muslim leader and spokesperson.

#### 1950

- The headquarters of the Ahmadiyya movement moves to Washington, D.C.
- Daoud Ahmed Faisal publishes *Al-Islam: The Religion of Humanity*, a long missionary tract urging Americans to

become Muslims and look to the Qur'an and the Sunna, or "Tradition," of the prophet Muhammad for guidance in both their personal and public lives.

#### 1950–1953

- Several Muslim-American soldiers, including Wilbur C. Islam, are killed in the Korean War.

#### 1952

- Initially called the International Muslim Society, the Federation of the Islamic Associations in the United States and Canada (FIA), a predominantly immigrant Muslim group, is established.
- Saxophonist Lynn Hope (Abdullah Rasheed Ahmad) appears with musicians Dinah Washington, Louis Jordan, and Lionel Hampton on a Mutual Radio program hosted by Ed Sullivan and broadcast live from Carnegie Hall.
- Members of the Tablighi Jamaat, a South Asian missionary group, first arrive in the United States.
- FIA leader and World War II veteran Abdullah Igram petitions the Eisenhower administration to allow Muslim soldiers to identify themselves on their military identification tags, or "dogtags"—just as Christians and Jews are allowed to do. The Department of Defense eventually allows the change.
- The Turkish Ministry of Culture sponsors the American tour of Mevlevi, or "whirling dervishes."

#### 1954

- Baba Rexheb, a Bektashi Sufi Muslim leader, establishes the first Albanian-American *tekke*, or "Sufi lodge," in Taylor, Michigan, just southwest of Detroit; the lodge is used for daily prayers, initiation ceremonies, and other Bektashi rituals.
- Using monies gained in part from their successful operation of bars and liquor stores, Muslims in Toledo, Ohio, open a mosque.

#### 1956

- British, French, and Israeli forces first invade and then withdraw from the Suez Canal in Egypt, making Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser a hero in the developing world and among many Muslim Americans, especially members of the Nation of Islam.

#### 1957

- The Islamic Center in Washington, D.C., is dedicated by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.
- Yemeni agricultural workers begin to settle in the San Joaquin Valley of California.
- Elijah Muhammad publishes *Muslim Daily Prayers*, a guide to making *salat*, or "Islamic prayer."

- Wali Akram, leader of the First Cleveland Mosque and former head of the Muslim Ten Year Plan, goes on hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.
- Protesting the beating of a fellow member of the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X, head of Temple No. 7 in Harlem, becomes well known in New York City.
- The Islamic Youth Organization, led by Joe Mallad and Mary Caudry, participates in the annual FIA convention, which features panel discussions, prayer, and evening dances.

### 1958

- Bass player Ahmed Abdul-Malik records *Jazz Sahara*, one of several successful solo albums in which Abdul-Malik blends Middle Eastern and African musical styles with American jazz.
- Jazz pianist Ahmad Jamal records *Live at the Pershing: But Not for Me*, which becomes one of the best-selling jazz records of all time.
- Jazz and pop singer Dakota Staton marries jazz trumpet player Talib Dawud and converts to Islam.

### 1959

- Journalists Mike Wallace and Louis Lomax introduce the Nation of Islam (NOI) to the country in a televised exposé provocatively titled *The Hate That Hate Produced*. Malcolm X, the spokesman for NOI leader Elijah Muhammad, rises to national prominence.

### 1960

- *The Muslim Star*, the newsletter of the FIA, is begun.

### 1961

- The American Druze Society selects Julie Mullin Makarem as its national leader, the first time a woman has held the post.
- Jazz artist Yusef Lateef releases *Eastern Sounds*, which includes the songs “Three Faces of Balal” and “Blues for the Orient.”
- C. Eric Lincoln publishes *The Black Muslims in America*, arguing that the Nation of Islam is a dysfunctional black nationalist group that is the product of poor race relations in the United States. He dubs the group “the Black Muslims,” a label that leads most non-Muslim Americans to believe that the Nation of Islam represents all African-American Muslims.

### 1962

- In *Fulwood v. Clemmer*, the Federal District Court for the District of Columbia finds in favor of William Fulwood, a member of the Nation of Islam who sued the director of D.C. prisons for religious discrimination. The case is

precedent-setting, establishing that Muslim prisoners have a right to practice their religion, under certain conditions, while incarcerated.

### 1962–1963

- Shi‘a Muslims in Detroit consecrate and celebrate the opening of the Islamic Center of America, one of Michigan’s largest and most influential mosques.

### 1963

- Clarence 13X leaves the Nation of Islam and begins to develop the Five Percenters.
- James H. Karoub, of Highland Park, Michigan, is elected to the Michigan House of Representatives.
- The Muslim Students Association is formed during a meeting of approximately 75 Muslim students on the campus of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

### 1964

- Malcolm X declares his independence from the Nation of Islam and announces the formation of his own Muslim Mosque, Inc. He travels to Mecca to perform the hajj and to Africa to meet with political leaders.
- Louis Farrakhan is named minister of the Nation of Islam Temple No. 7, a post once held by Malcolm X.
- The U.S. Supreme Court rules in *Cooper v. Pate* that prisoners have the right to sue prisons for religious discrimination and instructs prisons to treat all prisoners equally, regardless of their religious affiliation.
- Non-Muslim Richard Durham becomes editor of *Muhammad Speaks*, the weekly newspaper of the Nation of Islam, helping to turn the paper into one of the most popular sources of news among African Americans.
- *February 24*: Cassius Clay defeats Sonny Liston for the heavyweight boxing championship, announcing afterward that he is converting to Islam. In March, Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad gives him his new name, Muhammad Ali.

### 1965

- The Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments, also known as the Hart-Celler Act, repeal the quota system set in place by the National Origins Act of 1924; a million or more Muslims from Africa and Asia probably immigrate to the United States over the next 35 years.
- Elijah Muhammad publishes his magnum opus, *Message to the Blackman in America*.
- *February 21*: Malcolm X is assassinated at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, New York.

### 1966

- Explaining that his faith prohibits killing and that he has “no quarrel” with the North Vietnamese, Muhammad

Ali refuses induction into the U.S. military to fight in the Vietnam War. Ali is stripped of his title as world heavy-weight boxing champion.

- Poet and playwright Amiri Baraka, leader of the Black Arts movement, writes *Black Mass*, a play that retells the Nation of Islam's story in which the mad, evil scientist Yacub invents the "white devil."
- After studying Sufism for decades, Samuel L. Lewis (also known as Sufi Sam) becomes a popular teacher among hippies and other religious seekers in San Francisco.

## 1967

- Muslim-American physicians associated with the Muslim Students Association create the Muslim Medical Association, which later becomes the Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA).
- Khalid Ahmad Tawfiq, an African-American Muslim who studied at al-Azhar University in Egypt, creates the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood (MIB) in Harlem, New York.

## 1967–1968

- In the wake of the Arab defeat in the Six Day War with Israel, Arab Americans form the Arab American University Graduates, a nonsectarian public affairs group that seeks to influence public opinion about Arab affairs and the Middle East.

## 1968

- Palestinian-American Isma'il al-Faruqi, an advocate of Islamic revivalism, takes a teaching post at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Iranian-American professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr publishes *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man*, asserting that environmental degradation is a spiritual crisis.
- Clarence 13X, now called "Allah," is praised by New York City mayor John Lindsay for his efforts to quell violence in the wake of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination.
- Elijah Muhammad publishes the first volume of *How to Eat to Live*, a guide to his unique set of dietary guidelines.
- Sufi teachers Vilayat Inayat Khan and Samuel L. Lewis combine their missionary efforts, buoying the growth of the Sufi Order International and Sufism more generally in the United States.
- A group of predominantly African-American Sunni Muslims establishes its version of Darul Islam, or the "House of Islam," on 240 Sumpter Street in Brooklyn, New York.

## 1969

- After winning the National Collegiate Athletic Association men's national basketball championship for the third time at the University of California, Los Angeles, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar begins playing for the National Basketball Association's Milwaukee Bucks.

- Pakistani scholar Fazlur Rahman is the first Muslim to be appointed to the faculty of the University of Chicago Divinity School.

## 1970

- Casey Kasem, the voice of the character Shaggy in the popular cartoon series *Scooby Doo*, launches the syndicated radio program *American Top 40*.
- *June 16*: A Muslim-American Boy Scout is awarded the "In the Name of God" emblem during an Eagle Scout ceremony held in Ramsey, New Jersey.

## 1971

- In *Clay, a/k/a Ali v. United States*, the U.S. Supreme Court overturns Muhammad Ali's conviction for refusing induction into the U.S. military.
- Muhammed Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, a Sri Lankan religious leader, moves to Philadelphia and begins teaching Sufism to a group of disciples.
- The Muslim Students Association publishes *Al-Ittihad*, a periodical that features the teachings of Sayyid Qutb, Mawlana Maududi, and other advocates of Islamic revivalism.
- *April 2*: Muslim-American soldier Keith A. Rahman is awarded the Joint Services Commendation Medal.

## 1972

- A group of mainly first-generation Muslim immigrants forms the Association of Muslim Social Scientists of North America, a forum for exploring Islamic approaches to the humanities and social sciences.

## 1973

- Chicago's Sears Tower (now the Willis Tower), designed by architect Fazlur Rahman Khan, is completed. It is the tallest building in the United States and was the tallest building in the world until 1998.
- Muslim Students Association officials establish the North American Islamic Trust, which holds the titles to various mosques and publishes religious literature.

## 1974

- After losing to Joe Frazier in 1971, Muhammad Ali regains his boxing title, defeating a much younger George Foreman in a fight dubbed the "Rumble in the Jungle," held in Kinshasa, Zaire.
- Cedar Rapids, Iowa, native Bill Aosse cofounds Midamar, a company that ships halal, or religiously permissible prepared foods, across the United States and abroad.
- Jaludin Nuruddin, Sulieman El-Hadi, and Umar bin Hassan, members of the Last Poets, release their album *At Last*. Reciting jazzlike, syncopated verse over African-

style drumming, the Last Poets are later dubbed the “god-fathers of rap.”

- The Islamic Circle of North America, an organization run largely by first-generation South Asian–American Muslim immigrants, is established in New York City.
- Two Nimatullahi centers, associated with the Nimatullahi Sufi order in Iran, are established, one in San Francisco and another New York.

## 1975

- Longtime Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad dies, leaving his son, W. D. Mohammed, in charge of the Nation of Islam (NOI). Mohammed debunks those NOI teachings and practices that conflict with Sunni Islamic doctrine, including the teaching that NOI founder, W. D. Fard, is God in the flesh. Mohammed invites white people to join the movement and asks followers to fast during the month of Ramadan and pray five times a day in a Sunni Islamic fashion.
- Alianza Islámica, one of the first U.S. Latina/o Muslim grassroots organizations in the United States, is founded in New York by Ibrahim González and other Puerto Ricans.
- The Abode of the Message, a sprawling residential community and retreat operated by Vilayat Khan’s Sufi Order International, is opened in New Lebanon, New York.

## 1976

- Jamil Abdullah al-Amin (H. Rap Brown), a former leader in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party, establishes a Muslim ministry in the West End community of Atlanta, Georgia.
- The Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America is begun for the purpose of providing medical relief and other charitable services in North America and abroad.
- W. D. Mohammed changes the name of the Nation of Islam to the World Community of al-Islam in the West.

## 1976–1977

- Thousands of Christian and Muslim refugees from the Lebanese Civil War immigrate to the United States.

## 1977

- Syrian-American filmmaker Moustapha Akkad releases *The Message*, a film about the Prophet Muhammad, in the United States.
- Hanafi movement founder Hamaas Abdul Khaalis and his followers hold 132 people hostage for 36 hours in the Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., the offices of B’nai B’rith, and city hall; the standoff is ended through the intervention of the ambassadors of Egypt, Iran, and Pakistan.
- Minister Silis Muhammad establishes a new branch of the Nation of Islam.

## 1978

- Atlanta Masjid (“Mosque”) of Islam sponsors what is often considered to be the first all-Muslim Girl Scout troop in the United States.
- *Halloween*, a movie financed by Moustapha Akkad for \$325,000, is released and goes on to make \$47 million in box office receipts.
- Louis Farrakhan rejects the changes of W. D. Mohammed and establishes a new Nation of Islam based on the original teachings of Elijah Muhammad.
- The Mevlevi Order of America, a Sufi group famous for its “whirling dervishes,” is founded by Jeladdudin Loras in the San Francisco Bay area.

## 1979

- Minister Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam begins publishing *The Final Call* newspaper.
- The Persian-Speaking Group of the Muslim Students Association (MSA-PSG) is formed.
- The Aga Khan, leader of the worldwide community of Nizari Isma’ili Muslims, establishes a program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to study Islamic architecture.
- Nuridin Durkee, Sahl Kabbani, and Abdullah Naseef found Dar al-Islam, or the “Abode of Islam,” a Muslim religious community in Abiquiu, New Mexico.

## 1980

- Moustapha Akkad directs Anthony Quinn in *Lion of the Desert*, a film about Umar al-Mukhtar, a Libyan resistance leader who fought Mussolini’s occupation army before World War II.
- The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, a nonsectarian organization, is established in Washington, D.C., by former U.S. senator James Abourezk (D-S.Dak.).
- Barbara Nimri Aziz creates Radio Tahrir, a radio program dedicated to bringing Muslim and Arab voices to public broadcasting over WBAI in New York City.
- Sufi teacher Frithjof Schuon, also known as Isa Nur al-Din, moves to Bloomington, Indiana, where he creates a community of followers at Inverness Farms and eventually founds the Maryamiyya Sufi order.
- In Detroit, thousands attend the first international meeting of the Tablighi Jamaat, the South Asian missionary movement, held in the United States.

## 1981

- Muslim-American religious studies professor and community activist Isma’il al-Faruqi helps to create the International Institute of Islamic Thought in Herndon, Virginia, and the American Islamic College in Chicago.



- President Ronald Reagan appoints Robert Dickson Crane U.S. ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, the first time a Muslim is selected for an ambassadorship.

## 1982

- The Islamic Council on Scouting in North America is established, becoming custodian of all religious awards for Muslim Boy Scouts.
- Daudi Bohra Muslims erect their first American Islamic center in Detroit.
- The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York City rules in *Moorish Science Temple, Inc. v. Harold J. Smith* that prison officials must provide a diet consistent with their inmates' religious beliefs.

## 1983

- A group of African-American Sunni Muslims purchases farmland in New Medinah (New City), Mississippi, as a rural retreat that is later turned into a 64-acre residential community and farm.
- The bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, leads to a violent backlash against Muslim and Arab Americans in the United States.
- The Iron Sheikh (Hossein Vaziri) defeats Bob Backlund for the World Wrestling Federation championship.

## 1984

- The International Institute of Islamic Thought and the Association of Muslim Social Scientists begin jointly publishing the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, a peer-reviewed academic journal.
- The Houston Rockets of the National Basketball Association (NBA) select Nigerian-born Hakeem Olajuwon in the first round of the NBA draft.

## 1985

- Rashidah Abdul-Khabeer, an epidemiology nurse in Philadelphia, forms BEBASHI (Blacks Educating Blacks about Sexual Health Issues), a community group that provides health education, case management, and support services, especially to HIV/AIDS patients.

## 1986

- Turkish-American Ayhan Hakimoglu's Aydin Corporation builds airborne data communications equipment for the Patriot missile and designs other weapons systems, recording total sales worth \$136.9 million.
- Sufi leader Bawa Muhaiyaddeen dies and is buried in Unionville, Pennsylvania; his tomb becomes a site for *ziyara*, or "religious pilgrimage."

- Muslim New Yorkers stage the Muslim World Day Parade, turning the intersection of Lexington Avenue and 33rd Street into an outdoor mosque.

## 1987

- In a 5 to 4 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court rules in *O'Lone v. Estate of Shabazz* that prisons can restrict the free exercise of religion if such restrictions serve a legitimate government purpose. The new precedent limits the religious freedom granted to prisoners in the 1960s.
- Music duo Eric B. and Rakim release *Paid in Full*, one of three gold records that deeply influence the hip-hop genre.
- *Yusef Lateef's Little Symphony* wins a Grammy award for Best New Age Album.
- Wide receiver Ahmad Rashad of the Minnesota Vikings is selected for the Pro-Bowl, which features the National Football League's most outstanding players.

## 1988

- The National Islamic Committee on Girl Scouting of the USA is formed in Stamford, Connecticut.
- In Los Angeles, the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) is created to increase Muslim-American involvement in civic affairs and defend the interests of Muslim Americans.
- In New York, Khadijah Rivera founds PIEDAD, Propagación Islámica para la Educación de Devoción a Ala' el Divino ("Islamic Propagation for Education on the Devotion of Allah the Divine"), the first group geared toward Latina converts in the United States.

## 1989

- Farooq Kathwari, chairman and chief executive officer of Ethan Allen Interiors, Inc., takes the company private, purchasing one of the United States's best-known home furniture chains.
- Kareem Abdul-Jabbar retires from the Los Angeles Lakers, having won the National Basketball Association's Most Valuable Player award six times and after amassing 38,387 points, the most in league history.

## 1990

- The Muslim Public Affairs Committee denounces the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait but simultaneously calls for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the region; Muslim-American leader W. D. Mohammed supports the American-led coalition against Iraq.
- Abdurahman Alamoudi begins the American Muslim Council, a public affairs lobby, in Washington, D.C.
- Financier Mansoor Ijaz establishes Crescent Investment Management, a New York investment partnership between

himself; retired Lt. Gen. James Alan Abrahamson, former director of President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative; and Turkish investors.

- Sufi religious teacher Muhammad Hisham Kabbani moves from Lebanon to the United States to create the Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order of America in Fenton, Michigan.

## 1991

- Siraj Wahhaj, leader of Brooklyn's Masjid al-Taqlwa, the "Mosque of God Consciousness," is the first Muslim to lead the invocation before a session of the U.S. House of Representatives.
- AST Research, a computer hardware development company cofounded by Safi Qureshey, posts \$2.5 billion in revenue and is named to the Fortune 500.
- Alternative hip-hop group A Tribe Called Quest, two of whose members are Muslim, release *The Low End Theory*, considered by some to be one of the greatest hip-hop albums of all time.
- The building of New York City's Islamic Cultural Center, located at Third Avenue and 96th Street, is completed.

## 1992

- Radio and television personality Casey Kasem is inducted into the National Association of Broadcasters Radio Hall of Fame.
- W. D. Mohammed is the first Muslim to offer a prayer before the opening of a session of the U.S. Senate.
- Amina Wadud publishes *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective*.
- Financier Nemir Kirdar's Investcorp, an investment bank that buys stakes in companies such as Saks Fifth Avenue and Gucci, earns \$62.7 million on assets of \$1.1 billion.

## 1993

- Army Captain Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad becomes the first Muslim military chaplain.
- The American Muslim Council helps to organize a large protest in Washington, D.C., against U.S. policy in Bosnia, calling Serb atrocities against Bosnians genocide. The same year, it hails the signing of the Oslo Accords, a peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians.
- Former chair of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Atlantic Records cofounder Ahmet Ertegun receives a Grammy Trustee Award for lifetime achievement.
- The Council of Shi'a Ulama, or "religious scholars," is formed.
- Sheila Abdus-Salaam is elected to her first 14-year term on New York State's Supreme Court for the County of New York.

- The Wu-Tang Clan, a hip-hop group inspired by the Five Percenters, releases the album *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)*.
- *February 26*: A car bomb explodes beneath the World Trade Center in New York City, killing six people and injuring more than 1,000. Six Muslims associated with al-Qaeda are convicted for the crime.

## 1994

- Jazz pianist Ahmad Jamal receives an American Jazz Masters fellowship award from the National Endowment for the Arts.
- The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Muslim public advocacy and civil rights group, is organized in Washington, D.C.
- Jeffrey Lang, math professor at the University of Kansas, publishes his autobiography, *Struggling to Surrender: Some Impressions of an American Convert to Islam*.
- Columbia Records releases *Illmatic*, a widely acclaimed album by the hip-hop artist Nas.
- The Confederation of Somali Communities is founded in Minneapolis to assist the thousands of Somali refugees in the Twin Cities.
- *October*: The American Muslim Alliance, a public affairs group that fosters Muslim-American participation in electoral politics, is organized in Newark, California, by Pakistani-American educator and political activist Agha Saeed.

## 1995

- Faroque Khan, a Pakistani-American pulmonologist from Long Island, New York, is elected to the Board of Regents for the American College of Physicians.
- Discovered in an old trunk, the original 1831 Arabic autobiography of Omar ibn Said is sold at auction for \$21,000.
- Egyptian religious scholar Omar Abdel-Rahman is sentenced to life imprisonment for conspiring to attack five New York City landmarks, including the United Nations headquarters.
- Indonesian-American Muslims establish Masjid Al-Hikmah in Queens, New York.
- Basheer Ahmed, a psychiatrist, helps to create the Muslim Community Center for Human Services (MCCHS) in Fort Worth, Texas, offering free counseling services, a domestic violence hotline, health fairs, and other services to underserved populations.
- *October 16*: Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan leads the Million Man March in Washington, D.C., calling on black men to atone for past sins and renew their commitment to personal responsibility; an estimated 700,000 to 1.1 million people attend.

**1996**

- First Lady Hillary Clinton hosts the first Eid al-Fitr celebration at the White House to mark the end of Ramadan, the month during which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset each day.
- Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf (Chris Jackson), a player for the National Basketball Association's Denver Nuggets, refuses to stand during the playing of the national anthem, saying that Islam forbids worship of any nationalist symbol as a form of idolatry. Fellow Muslim NBA player Hakeem Olajuwon condemns the act.
- Lt. M. Malik Abd al-Mut'a Ali Noel, Jr., is commissioned as the U.S. Navy's first chaplain.
- Muhammad Ali, former heavyweight boxing champion now suffering from Parkinson's disease, lights the flame to open the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia.
- Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN), a youth group focusing on after-school activities, outreach, and the arts, is begun in Chicago.
- Muslim-American medical students create the University Muslim Medical Association (UMMA) Community Clinic to serve a primarily African-American and Latina/o community in South Central Los Angeles.
- Religious studies scholar Hamza Yusuf cofounds the Zaytuna Institute, a school offering a traditional Islamic seminary education geared toward addressing contemporary American life.

**1997**

- Juan Alvarado, Samantha Sánchez, and Saraji Umm Zaid establish the Latino American Dawah Organization (LADO) in New York City.
- Tariq Abdul-Wahad (Olivier Michael Saint-Jean), the first National Basketball Association player born and raised in France, is drafted by the Sacramento Kings.
- Followers of Turkish preacher Fethullah Gülen form the Niagara Foundation in Chicago, one of several local groups in the United States devoted to Gülen's call for service, moral self-evaluation, and interfaith dialogue.

**1998**

- Al-Fatiha, an advocacy group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Muslims, is founded in New York City.
- Eboo Patel, Muslim-American leader, plays a leading role in establishing the Interfaith Youth Core, a Chicago-based group that asks youths of various faiths to perform public service together.
- The intersection of Franklin and Jackson Streets at the foot of Chicago's Sears Tower (now the Willis Tower) is named "Fazlur R. Khan Way" in honor of Khan, who also designed Chicago's John Hancock Center and the Onterie Center—in addition to the Hajj Terminal of the

King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

- Belkis Altareb, Maryam Funchess, Aneesah Nadir, and Shahina Siddiqui create the Islamic Social Services Association, designed to be a forum for coordinating social work, service delivery, and mental health care among Muslim Americans.
- The King Fahd Mosque in Culver City, a suburb of Los Angeles, is built with \$8 million in donations from Prince Abdul Aziz bin Fahd, a son of Saudi Arabia's monarch.
- Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan promotes Ava Muhammad to lead Atlanta's Muhammad Mosque No. 15, becoming the first female minister in the organization.

**1999**

- Ahmed Zewail wins the Nobel Prize in chemistry for his work in femtochemistry, an area of physical chemistry that uses extremely fast laser flashes to examine chemical reactions in process on a molecular level.
- Software engineer Kenan Sahin sells his Kenan System Corporation, a leading maker of billing software, to Lucent Technologies for \$1.45 billion in stock.
- W. D. Mohammed addresses an interfaith gathering at the Vatican with both Pope John Paul II and the Dalai Lama in the audience.
- The Muslim American Society launches *American Muslim* magazine.
- Over the next five years, the Pew Charitable Trust grants \$1.25 million for the study of "Muslims in the American Public Square" at Georgetown University.
- M. Osman Siddique becomes U.S. ambassador to Fiji, Nauru, Tonga, and Tuvalu.
- Photographer and video artist Shirin Neshat wins the International Award of the Venice Biennial for her works *Turbulent* and *Rapture*, multimedia artworks that explore gender relations in contemporary Iran.

**2000**

- Congress passes the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, which restores the religious freedom of prisoners scaled back in *O'Lone v. Estate of Shabazz* (1987).
- One out of every 10 students enrolled in the New York City public schools is probably Muslim.
- Football player Az-Zahir Ali Hakim, a wide receiver, helps the St. Louis Rams win the Super Bowl.
- The Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut, offers an accredited Islamic chaplaincy program for Muslim chaplains serving in prisons, the military, and other institutions.

- Muslim-American hip-hop artist Everlast (Erik Schrody) shares a Grammy Award with Carlos Santana for their song “Put Your Lights On.”
- Rapper Mos Def stars in Spike Lee’s movie *Bamboozled*, the first of several successful roles in the film industry.

## 2001

- According to the FBI, hate crimes against Muslims, Arabs, and people mistaken for Muslims and Arabs rise 1,700 percent.
- The USA PATRIOT Act authorizes the government to detain people it regards as terrorist suspects as “material witnesses” to crimes—without “probable cause,” meaning without the reasonable suspicion that the person has committed any crime. Approximately 1,200 Muslims and Arabs are held by the FBI on suspicion of terrorism charges and denied access to attorneys and their families.
- Yaphett el-Amin is elected to the Missouri State House, one of several Muslims and one of the few Muslim women to serve in state legislatures.
- More than 19,000 African refugees arrive in the United States mainly from Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.
- The United States Postal Service issues a postage stamp, designed by Muslim-American calligrapher Mohammed Zakariya, to commemorate the Islamic holidays of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.
- The U.S. military captures John Walker Lindh, the so-called American Taliban, in Afghanistan.
- *Azizah*, a glossy Muslim women’s magazine, is established in Atlanta, Georgia.
- After seven years of study abroad, religious leader Zaid Shakir graduates with an advanced degree in Islamic studies from Abu Noor University in Damascus, Syria.
- *September 11*: Nineteen Saudi Arabian and Egyptian members of al-Qaeda hijack four jets and stage coordinated terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon near Washington, D.C., murdering almost 3,000 people.

## 2002

- Elias Zerhouni, an Algerian-American physician, is appointed director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
- After 18 seasons in the National Basketball Association, Hakeem Olajuwon retires, having won the Most Valuable Player award in 2004, two consecutive NBA titles with the Houston Rockets in 1994 and 1995, and a gold medal as a member of the U.S. team at the 1996 Olympics.
- *April 20*: In Washington, D.C., 50,000 Muslim Americans, Arab Americans, and their allies protest the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories.

## 2003

- Suheir Hammad, author of *Born Palestinian, Born Black* (1996), wins a Tony Award for her performance in the Broadway production of Russell Simmons’s Def Poetry Jam.
- President George W. Bush appoints UCLA law professor Khaled Abou El Fadl to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.
- Comic Dave Chappelle achieves national prominence and financial success with *Chappelle’s Show* on the Comedy Central channel.
- Public Broadcasting Service television channels broadcast *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet*.
- As part of its public diplomacy in the Muslim world, the U.S. Department of State sponsors the tour of Native Deen, an African-American Muslim hip-hop group, to Mali, Senegal, and Nigeria. The group eventually tours the Middle East as well.
- According to one poll, only 13 percent of Muslim Americans support the U.S. invasion of Iraq.
- Thousands of Muslim Americans—estimates range from 3,700 to 20,000—are now members of the U.S. military.

## 2004

- Jamil Abdullah al-Amin, leader of a network of 20 to 30 mosques sometimes identified as the Darul Islam movement, is convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment plus 30 years amid cries of foul play by supporters in the Muslim and African-American communities.
- Approximately 14,000, mostly Arabs and Muslims, have now been deported for overstaying their visas or similar violations, representing one of the largest mass deportations of illegal aliens in U.S. history.
- In *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, the U.S. Supreme Court rules that Yaser Hamdi, a U.S. citizen and suspected terrorist held in detention at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, has the right to challenge his detention before an impartial judge. The case is one of a series in which the judicial branch limits the powers of the executive branch to jail people indefinitely without charging them of a crime.
- Hadia Mubarak, a graduate student at Georgetown University, is the first woman elected president of the Muslim Students Association national office.
- Michael Muhammad Knight publishes *The Taqwacores*, a novel about Muslim punk rockers.

## 2005

- The Fiqh Council of North America issues a fatwa condemning terrorism and all acts of extremism, including suicide bombings, which is signed by every major Muslim-American organization and more than 100 local mosques and Islamic centers.



- Religious scholar Amina Wadud leads a Friday congregational prayer in New York City, violating a traditional taboo against women leading men in prayer.
- Ebru TV, a part of the movement associated with Turkish preacher Fethullah Gülen, begins broadcasting English-language programming in New Jersey.
- The Muslim Alliance in North America elects Siraj Wahhaj as amir, or “leader;” University of Kentucky religious studies professor Ihsan Bagby serves as secretary general.
- *November 9:* Moustapha Akkad, the most successful Muslim-American filmmaker of the 20th century, is killed in a terrorist bombing of the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Amman, Jordan.

## 2006

- Keith M. Ellison, Democrat from Minnesota, becomes the first Muslim elected to the U.S. Congress; he later borrows Thomas Jefferson’s copy of the Qur’an from the Library of Congress for his swearing-in ceremony.
- The Lady Caliphs, the girls’ basketball team from Atlanta’s W. D. Mohammed High School, reach the Georgia state playoffs.
- In *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) v. Alamo Rent-A-Car*, a federal district court in Arizona rules in favor of the EEOC, which filed a suit on behalf of Bilan Nur. Nur, a Muslim-American woman, was fired by Alamo immediately after 9/11 when she refused to take off her hijab, or “head scarf,” at work. Nur is eventually awarded \$287,000 in damages in a separate jury trial.
- Islamic studies scholar Ingrid Mattson is elected president of the Islamic Society of North America, the largest Muslim organization in the United States.
- The U.S. government apologizes to Muslim-American lawyer Brandon Mayfield for his wrongful arrest in connection with the 2004 terrorist attacks in Madrid, Spain, and pays Mayfield \$2 million in restitution.
- Shahzia Sikander, an artist specializing in modern versions of Indo-Persian miniature painting, wins a MacArthur Fellows (“genius”) award.

## 2007

- José Padilla, once accused of conspiring to detonate a “dirty bomb” in the United States, is convicted on several lesser terrorism-related conspiracy charges; he is sentenced in 2008 to 17 years in prison.
- After serving as public health director in Washington, D.C., and as president of the American Public Health Association, Pakistani-American Muhammad Akhter is appointed to direct the National Medical Association, which represents 30,000 African-American physicians.

- Protests ensue after the University of Michigan, Dearborn, and the Indianapolis International Airport announce plans to install footbaths in which Muslims can perform their ablutions before prayer; protesters deem the accommodation preferential treatment for Muslims.
- *October 7:* Major James Ahearn, a convert to Islam, is killed in Iraq. He is probably the most decorated Muslim-American soldier in history, having received two Bronze Stars, two Meritorious Service Medals, five Army Commendation Medals, a Humanitarian Service Medal, two National Defense Service Medals, and an Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal, among other awards.

## 2008

- André D. Carson, a Democrat representing the Indianapolis area, is the second Muslim elected to the U.S. Congress.
- Azhar Usman, Preacher Moss, and Mo Amer star in *Allah Made Me Funny*, an independent film that opens on 14 screens across the country.
- On NBC’s *Meet the Press*, former secretary of State Colin Powell eulogizes Kareem Rashad Sultan Khan, a Muslim-American soldier who was killed in Iraq.
- In *Boumediene v. Bush*, the U.S. Supreme Court rules that all detainees held at Guantánamo Bay, including foreigners, have the right of habeas corpus, meaning that they must be allowed to challenge their detention in U.S. courts.
- On their second try, federal prosecutors successfully convict five officials of the Holy Land Foundation, a Muslim-American charity, of 108 criminal counts stemming from their \$12.4 million donation to the charitable arm of Hamas, the Palestinian political party. Prosecutors convince the jury that these contributions amount to material support of a terrorist group.
- The Empire State Building in New York City commemorates Eid al-Fitr, the holiday marking the end of Ramadan, by turning its tower lights green, the color most associated with Islam.

## 2009

- *January 29:* President Barack Obama announces the closure of the detention center at Guantánamo Bay.
- *June 4:* President Obama addresses the Muslim world in Cairo, Egypt, calling for a “new beginning” in relations between the United States and Muslims abroad.
- *July 4:* Some 45,000 people attend the annual convention of the Islamic Society of North America in Washington, D.C., including Christian minister Rick Warren, who calls for increased interfaith social activism.

# *Entries A–Z*







**Abdel-Rahman, Omar (1938– )** *Muslim cleric convicted of sedition*

Omar Abdel-Rahman is an exiled Egyptian cleric who received life imprisonment in 1995 for conspiring to attack various NEW YORK CITY landmarks. He was also a suspect in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, though prosecutors did not formally link him to that crime. His trial attracted intense media scrutiny and helped make “Islamist terrorism” a more central issue in American politics nearly a decade before the attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.

Abdel-Rahman was born to a peasant family on May 3, 1938, in El Manzala, Egypt. Despite a severe case of diabetes that permanently blinded him, he memorized a Braille copy of the QUR’AN by age 11. In 1965, he received a master’s degree in theology from Cairo University, after which he began work on a Ph.D. in Islamic law at the University of al-Azhar, a Muslim seminary in Cairo and one of the oldest continuously operating universities in the world.

Egypt’s defeat by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War radicalized Abdel-Rahman’s politics. Already a critic of President Gamal Abdel Nasser’s secular regime, he soon attracted a following as an outspoken shaykh, or Islamic “scholar.” Over the next two decades, he acted as spiritual guide to an increasingly powerful network of militant groups that included Jama’a al-Islamiyya and Islamic Jihad. In 1981, the Egyptian government tried him as a conspirator in the assassination of President Anwar Sadat, claiming that he had given the assassins religious sanction by releasing a fatwa, or “legal opinion,” that condemned Sadat as an infidel. A military court acquitted him of the charges.

In 1988, Abdel-Rahman joined the U.S.-backed mujahideen, or “holy warriors,” in their fight against Afghanistan’s Soviet-supported regime. When he returned to Egypt two years later, informants told him that the government planned to arrest him. He fled to Sudan and obtained a tourist visa from the U.S. embassy in Khartoum. He settled in Brooklyn, New York, and then Jersey City, New Jersey, where the Al-Salam mosque welcomed him as an imam, or “prayer leader.” His presence drew headlines when one of his followers assassinated Rabbi Meir Kahane, founder of the Jewish Defense

League, in November 1990. Three years later, U.S. immigration officers arrested him on charges of falsifying information on his visa. The episode proved an embarrassment to the U.S. government, which had repeatedly allowed him to leave and reenter the country despite his presence on the State Department’s official terrorist list—an oversight that agents attributed first to a computing error and later to deception.

Abdel-Rahman’s case took on far greater significance when federal prosecutors introduced evidence suggesting he had been involved in a plot to attack five New York City landmarks. The government alleged that he and nine coconspirators, some of whom were also connected to the first World Trade Center bombing in February 1993, had hoped to weaken U.S. support for Egypt and Israel by simultaneously bombing the United Nations headquarters, 26 Federal Plaza, the George Washington Bridge, and the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels. The FBI and an undercover informant further claimed that the group had planned to assassinate Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. A jury found the defendants guilty of seditious conspiracy, and Abdel-Rahman received a sentence of life in prison.

Abdel-Rahman again became a source of controversy in February 2005 when his lawyer, Lynne Stewart, and her translator were convicted of providing material aid to terrorism by passing violent messages to his followers in Egypt. Stewart admitted her “mistake” but argued that prison rules forbidding the messages were unconstitutional. She received a 28-month prison sentence and was disbarred.

The impact of Abdel-Rahman’s violent rhetoric and political radicalism on Muslim Americans was profound. For the most part, Abdel-Rahman was unsuccessful in convincing Muslim Americans to use violence as a legitimate form of protest against U.S. foreign policy. But his presence as a sensational, if rare, voice of Muslim-American intolerance stoked the fear among many non-Muslims that he represented mainstream Muslim America. Even as Muslim-American leaders denied any connection to his brand of political Islam, they could do little to stem the growing “Islamophobia” that persons such as Omar Abdel-Rahman helped to fuel.

*William Brown*

## 2 Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem

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### Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem (Lew Alcindor)

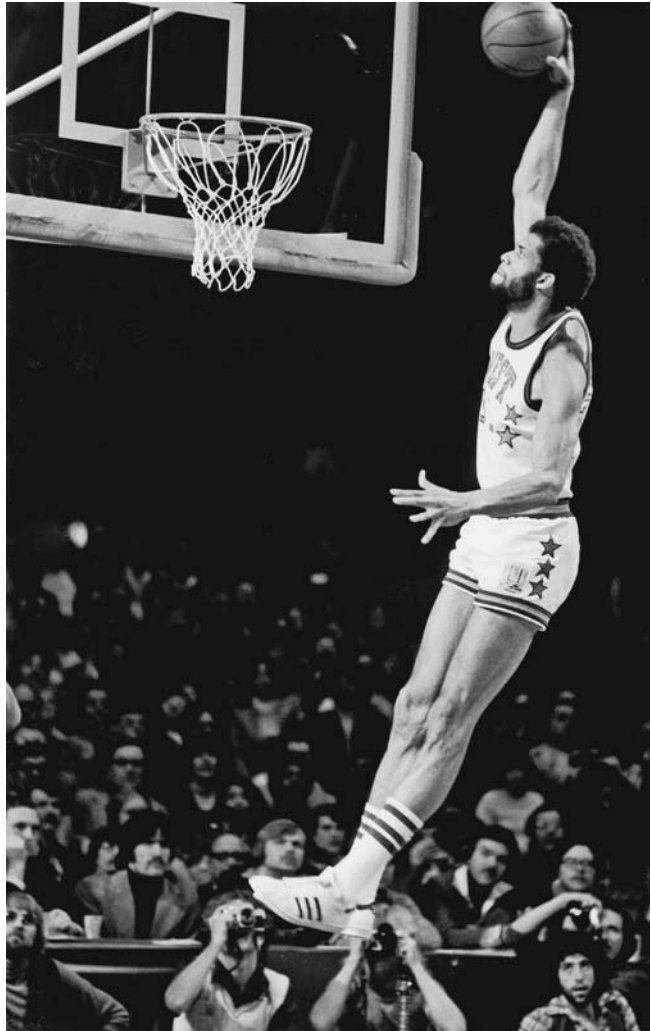
(1947– ) professional basketball player

A seven-foot-two-inch-tall center in the NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION who set the career record for points scored, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was one of several English-speaking celebrities who became Muslim in the 1960s and 1970s after growing up in Christian families and whose conversions drew national attention to Islam in the United States. First attaining national fame as a player in the late 1960s for the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), he played professionally for the Milwaukee Bucks and Los Angeles Lakers and wrote about how Islam affected his life. Since retiring from his basketball career in 1989, he has coauthored books on African-American history.

Born in Harlem, New York, on April 16, 1947, his birth name was Ferdinand Lewis Alcindor, Jr., given by a Catholic father who was a police officer and a mother who was born Baptist but converted to Catholicism. He attended Catholic schools, starring as a high school basketball player at Power Memorial Academy in Manhattan and leading his team on a 71-game winning streak. A celebrity in local basketball circles for his high school play, he became friendly with Wilt Chamberlain, the professional basketball superstar whose record for career points he would break in the 1980s.

#### COLLEGE AND PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL LIFE

Lew Alcindor, as he was initially known, attended UCLA from 1965 to 1969, playing basketball under legendary college basketball coach John Wooden. Their teams, which had a remarkable 88-2 record, won the National Collegiate



With his enormous reach and talent, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was one of the greatest basketball players of all time. During his 20-year career in the National Basketball Association, he scored a record 38,387 points. (Ozier Muhammad/*Ebony* Collection via AP images)

Athletic Association championships three times, in 1967, 1968, and 1969.

He began his first professional season for the Milwaukee Bucks, an expansion team, in 1969, winning the league's Rookie of the Year award as the Bucks finished second in the NBA's Eastern Conference, a remarkable showing for an expansion team. The following season, he and fellow superstar Oscar Robertson led the team to the NBA Championship. Abdul-Jabbar won the league's Most Valuable Player award that season, the first of six he would win during his career. Although he is better known for his time with the Los Angeles Lakers, Abdul-Jabbar had the majority of his best statistical seasons while playing for the Bucks from 1969 to 1975.

The Bucks traded him to the Lakers in 1975. Over the next 13 seasons, the Lakers, led by Abdul-Jabbar and another superstar, Magic Johnson, captured five NBA championships, in 1980, 1982, 1985, 1987, and 1988. By the end of Abdul-Jabbar's career in 1989, he had scored 38,387 points, the most in NBA history.

### RELIGIOUS LIFE

His religious life was transformed while he attended UCLA. During his first days at college, he stopped attending Catholic mass, even though he had done so regularly as a child. Later during his freshman year, he was deeply affected by reading *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Learning about Malcolm X's transition from the NATION OF ISLAM to Sunni Islam led him to reexamine his thinking about race and to search for a new religion for himself, he wrote in his own autobiography, *Giant Steps* (1983), which includes a detailed account of his conversion to Islam.

His spiritual transformation continued in his sophomore and junior years of college. Doubting the existence of a Christian Trinity—the Christian belief that while God is one, God is also three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—he read about Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Taoism, and other religions before settling on Islam. He chose Sunni Islam for himself rather than Shi'i Islam largely because Malcolm X was a Sunni, he wrote in *Giant Steps*. He took his *shahada*, the Islamic profession of faith, after his junior year, during the summer of 1968, at a mosque on 125th Street in Manhattan.

He soon took his *shahada* a second time—that very summer—after his religious knowledge increased further and his practice intensified under the guidance of a friend of his father, a former drummer named HAMAAS ABDUL KHAALIS, who had converted to Islam. Khaalis, who organized a Hanafi movement in the United States, gave him the name Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

In *Giant Steps*, Abdul-Jabbar wrote that Islam sustained his spirit during his years in Milwaukee, a city he disliked. He stayed in close contact with Khaalis, who challenged him to marry so he would not be violating Islam's teaching against sex outside wedlock. Khaalis helped him select a wife, taught her about Islam, and gave her an Islamic name, Habiba. In 1971, Abdul-Jabbar and Habiba married in Washington, D.C., at a mosque led by Khaalis that Abdul-Jabbar had financed shortly after the Bucks won the championship. That autumn, Abdul-Jabbar made his name change official.

In *Giant Steps*, Abdul-Jabbar wrote about other spiritual moments related to his practice of Islam, including the 1972 birth of his first daughter, Habiba. When she was first handed to him she was crying, but when he softly chanted the *ADHAN*, testifying to the oneness of God and Muhammad's prophecy, she became calm.

Abdul-Jabbar studied Arabic at Harvard University that summer. Additional religious studies classes there led to the fraying of his ties with Khaalis, whose religious authority Abdul-Jabbar now came to doubt. The relationship changed again in January 1973, when six of Khaalis's relatives were slain by members of the Nation of Islam angry over Khaalis's criticism of that organization's theology. In Los Angeles, Abdul-Jabbar moderated his religious practices, he wrote in *Giant Steps*. He has five children in total, three with his wife, whom he divorced in the 1970s, and two with other women—named Habiba, Sultana, Kareem, Jr., Amir, and Adam.

### ACTING AND WRITING

Abdul-Jabbar's basketball fame paved the way for an acting career on the side, with cameo appearances in the movies *Airplane* (1980) and *Fletch* (1985) and in sitcoms including *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Full House*, *Diff'rent Strokes*, *Martin*, and *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*. He also acted in the movie *Game of Death* (1978) with Bruce Lee, a friend.

Abdul-Jabbar's autobiography, *Giant Steps*, cowritten with Peter Knobler, was a best seller. After his basketball career he coauthored several books on African-American history that focused on the Harlem Renaissance, African-American soldiers in WORLD WAR II, and, in *Black Profiles in Courage*, notable figures, including Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, and Frederick Douglass. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is universally viewed as being among the best players in NBA history. In 1996, he was ranked among the top 50 of all time in a commemorative event celebrating the NBA's 50th anniversary, and in 2008, he was chosen the greatest college player in history on ESPN.com, the sports Web site. Through his books and occasional blogging, he has fashioned a postcareer reputation as a thoughtful writer about politics and African-American history.

Jeff Diamant

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**Abdul Khaalis, Hamaas** See KHAALIS, HAMAAS ABDUL.

**Abdul-Malik, Ahmed (1927–1993) *jazz innovator***

A player of the bass (sometimes called the contrabass or double bass) and the oud, the Middle Eastern stringed instrument similar to a lute, Ahmed Abdul-Malik is credited with blending Middle Eastern and North African musical styles into American JAZZ.

Born in NEW YORK CITY on January 30, 1927, to a father who traced his roots to the Sudan, Abdul-Malik began studying MUSIC when he was seven, first playing the violin and then piano, tuba, and the bass. Abdul-Malik grew up in the Atlantic Avenue neighborhood of Brooklyn, an established Arab-American community where immigrants from Eastern Europe mingled with those from the Middle East and North Africa. He listened to Middle Eastern music and studied the violin with a Russian teacher. While still a teenager, he performed in a variety of settings, including community orchestras and Greek, Roma, and Syrian weddings. He also attended the High School for the Performing Arts in New York City.

In 1945, he played with jazz artist and educator ART BLAKEY (1919–90), who became a convert to Islam in the late 1940s. Abdul-Malik also played with Sam “the Man” Taylor in 1954 and Randy Weston from 1954 to 1957, but his best-known collaboration was with pianist Thelonious Monk, with whom he appeared on the television programs “The Seven Lively Arts” and “The Sound of Jazz” in 1957. On November 29, 1957, Abdul-Malik also played a benefit concert with Monk for the Morningside Community Center in Harlem with John Coltrane on tenor saxophone and Shadow Wilson on drums. As a solo artist, Abdul-Malik released several successful albums, including *Jazz Sahara* (1958), *East Meets West* (1959), *The Music of Ahmed Abdul-Malik* (1961), *Sounds of Africa* (1961–62), *Eastern Moods* (1963), and *Spellbound* (1964).

In 1961, Abdul-Malik departed the United States for a tour of South America that was sponsored by the Department of State. As just one part of a 22-year program, Abdul-Malik joined many of America’s most famous “jazz ambassadors,” including Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Dave Brubeck, Benny Goodman, Charles Mingus, and Ornette Coleman, in bringing this American art to the rest of the world. Begun during the administration of President Dwight Eisenhower—not generally known as a jazz fan—the program was aimed to project a progressive, civilized image of the United States as part of the battle of ideas during the cold war with the Soviet Union. In addition to displaying what many consider to be America’s greatest contribution to world culture, jazz, the program sought to blunt criticisms of the United States as a racially backward country by sponsor-

ing the concerts of African-American jazz artists, sometimes along with white artists.

In 1970, Abdul-Malik began teaching jazz in New York and, beginning in 1973, offered students instruction in Middle Eastern and African music at Brooklyn College. In 1972, Abdul-Malik headlined the jazz festival in Tangiers, Morocco. In 1984, he received BMI’s Pioneer in Jazz Award in recognition of his work in melding Middle Eastern music and jazz. He died on October 2, 1993, in Long Branch, New Jersey.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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**Abdul Rauf, Feisal (1948– ) *founder of the American Society for Muslim Advancement***

Feisal Abdul Rauf, a prominent leader in the Muslim-American community, founded the American Society for Muslim Advancement in 1997. He has attempted to present a peaceful and tolerant model of Islam to the West through his publications and speeches and encouraged Muslims to participate fully in U.S. POLITICS and society.

Abdul Rauf was born in Kuwait to Egyptian parents on October 23, 1948. Both his grandfather and father were educated in Islamic studies and served as imams, or “religious leaders.” He grew up in Malaysia and England before immigrating to the United States to study physics at Columbia University at age 18. He became fluent in Arabic, Malay, and English.

After completing some postgraduate work at the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey, Abdul Rauf took a series of jobs in the 1960s and 1970s that had little to do with organized religion. He taught in NEW YORK CITY public high schools, offering classes in remedial reading until he was laid off in the middle 1970s. He also sold industrial filters and worked for a real estate investment firm. In 1980, Abdul Rauf became a U.S. citizen. In 1983, Abdul Rauf left his corporate life to enter the family business. He became the imam of Masjid al-Farah in lower Manhattan. Though only 40 or so people attended Friday congregational prayers when the mosque was founded, approximately 350 came on a weekly basis by 2004. To educate Muslim Americans about Islamic tradition, Abdul Rauf also published *Islam: A Search for Meaning* (1996) and *Islam: A Sacred Law* (2000). In these books, he applied a Sufi perspective to Islamic texts,



emphasizing the spiritual impulse to seek God as central to the QUR'AN and the SHARI'A, or Islamic "law and ethics."

To help build bridges between Islam and the West, Abdul Rauf founded the American Society for Muslim Advancement in 1997. The society sponsored exhibitions and performances that displayed Islamic arts and culture and events that addressed current issues. He also founded the Cordoba Initiative designed to heal relations between Islam and America by arranging dialogues among Muslim leaders and representatives of other faiths. Abdul Rauf appeared regularly on major television networks, contributed articles to national newspapers, and was invited to speak at numerous global gatherings, such as the World Economic Forum. His wife, Daisy Khan, has also been a public representative of American Muslims and director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement.

After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Abdul Rauf became more visible in the media, particularly since his mosque was located just 12 blocks north of the World Trade Center in New York City. To address anti-Muslim prejudices deepened by the fear of Islamic terrorism, Abdul Rauf wrote his most widely read book, *What's Right With Islam: A New Vision for Muslims and the West* (2004). This book promoted the compatibility of Islamic and American governance and faith. Abdul Rauf argued that democratic principles of government had existed in Medina in the seventh century under the rule of the prophet MUHAMMAD; if they learn from this model, he claimed, Muslim groups can grow and prosper in America. He identified the core of Islam in the Qur'an as a twofold divine mandate: love of God and love of neighbor. On this basis, Abdul Rauf called for unity and cooperation among religions. He advocated the contemporary relevance of Sufi Islamic spirituality for Muslims worldwide as a viable alternative to authoritarian forms of Islam such as WAHHABISM.

Sarah K. Pinnock

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### Abdul-Rauf, Mahmoud (Chris Jackson)

(1969– ) professional basketball player

Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf is a professional basketball player who spent nine seasons with the Denver Nuggets (1991–

96), Sacramento Kings (1997–98), and Vancouver Grizzlies (2001) of the NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (NBA) before continuing his career overseas. While he has received some attention for his on-court talent, he is mostly remembered for his refusal to stand during the national anthem, which sparked an intense debate about the assimilation of America's Muslim population.

Abdul-Rauf was born Chris Wayne Jackson on March 9, 1969, in Gulfport, Mississippi. He was raised Baptist by his mother. After struggling in school, he was diagnosed with Tourette syndrome, a mental disorder that caused him to twitch and yelp uncontrollably. The disorder also made him a perfectionist, and he spent hours on the basketball court, practicing jump shots until his mind was satisfied. By the time he reached high school, he had already fielded scholarship offers from a number of colleges.

In 1988, Abdul-Rauf chose to attend Louisiana State University (LSU) and play for their basketball team, the Tigers. He averaged just over 30 points per game in his first season with LSU—setting a record for most total points scored by a freshman—and used his sharpshooting touch to help the Tigers upset number two-ranked Georgetown. The media honored his outstanding play by naming him Southeastern Conference Player of the Year and a first-team All-American. Off the court, college life introduced him to black history and literature, to social activism, and to a circle of politically minded friends. According to Abdul-Rauf, he also began to study Islam after reading MALCOLM X's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

After two seasons at LSU, Abdul-Rauf left the Tigers for the NBA. The Denver Nuggets selected him third overall in the 1990 NBA draft, but despite high expectations, he struggled. Meanwhile, his commitment to Islam intensified. He studied Arabic, visited mosques, and spoke with Muslim leaders across the country. After a period of transitioning, which included regular prayer at the Colorado Muslim Society and a divorce from his non-Muslim wife, he converted to Sunni Islam in the spring of 1993. He signified his conversion by officially changing his name to Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf. His play improved almost immediately. He averaged nearly 20 points per game during the 1992–93 season, earning NBA Most Improved Player honors and a trip to the All-Star Slam Dunk Contest. The following year, he fell one make short of shooting the best free throw percentage in league history.

Just as Abdul-Rauf's career was taking off, however, his religious life became a source of public controversy when he refused to stand for "The Star-Spangled Banner," which is played before every NBA game. He claimed that his religion forbade worship of any nationalist symbol as a form of idolatry. For much of the 1995–96 season, he had chosen to remain in the locker room before tip-off, but at a home game in March 1996, he openly sat down during the song. Fans,

journalists, and even fellow Muslims, including Houston Rockets center HAKEEM OLAJUWON, swiftly condemned his act. Three Denver disc jockeys responded by blasting a recording of the anthem inside a local mosque. Abdul-Rauf refused to change his position even when the NBA suspended him indefinitely, prompting the league to offer a compromise that allowed him to pray visibly while the anthem played.

The compromise did not quell the uproar over Abdul-Rauf's decision. Opposing fans booed him during the anthem. Public attacks against him became broader criticisms of his religion, as many Americans had come to associate Islam with terrorism following the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and a foiled plot to blow up NEW YORK CITY landmarks. Muslim Americans were divided in their responses. Some embraced his principled stand, whereas others questioned his understanding of Islam. One organization, the Society for Adherence to the Sunna, even issued a fatwa, or legal ruling, in his defense. Though the controversy faded after a few weeks, public concern about the loyalty of Muslim Americans lingered among the NBA's predominantly white, Christian fans.

Abdul-Rauf's actions also alienated teammates and coaches. They resented his special demands, such as a request for a separate prayer room and shower, and fumed over his weakened condition during the Ramadan fast. Head Coach Dan Issel later told a Denver magazine that he "loved" Abdul-Rauf but "didn't fully understand his religion or why he was doing the things he was doing. . . . Sometimes I'd see him out there and I wished that I had that Baptist boy from Mississippi." In the months following the March anthem incident, the Nuggets traded Abdul-Rauf to Sacramento. He spent parts of three seasons with the Kings and the Vancouver Grizzlies before moving his career to Europe.

In 2000, Abdul-Rauf built a mosque in Gulfport that attracted nearly 40 adherents until the building was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Vandalism to his home forced him to relocate to Atlanta a few years later, where he lived with his wife, April, and their five children.

William Brown

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### Abdul-Wahad, Tariq (Olivier Michael Saint-Jean) (1974– ) basketball player

The first NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (NBA) player to be born and raised in France, Tariq Abdul-Wahad garnered attention in the United States in 1997, when he earned all-American recognition as a junior player for San Jose State University in California. That year, the Sacramento Kings selected him in the first round of the NBA draft; he was the 11th overall pick. In 1997–98, his first season in the league, he scored double figures in 22 games. Abdul-Wahad spent a total of six years actively playing in the NBA, from 1997 to 2003, playing for four different teams: the Sacramento Kings, Orlando Magic, Denver Nuggets, and Dallas Mavericks.

Born Olivier Michael Saint-Jean on November 8, 1974, Abdul-Wahad was raised in Maisons-Alfort, Val-de-Marne, a southeastern suburb of Paris, France. He was a son of Luc Saint-Jean and George Goudet, who had emigrated to France from French Guiana. Inspired by his mother, who had played for a professional basketball team, Abdul-Wahad joined Versailles Basket Club, a local basketball team for children, at age 11. At age 13, he was selected to play for the regional team. His mother sent him to a boarding school in Rouen, the capital of Normandy, in northern France, for 10th grade. At the age of 16, a scout from Evreux, a French professional basketball team, signed him to a contract—with the permission of his mother. He stayed with Evreux for three years, and in 1992, he placed third in the French junior championships.

In 1993, an NBA scout spotted him while playing with Evreux. Later that same year, Abdul-Wahad was invited to a summer camp in Irvine, near LOS ANGELES, California. He finished in 19th position out of 200 players. He then moved to Michigan, where he played for the University of Michigan Wolverines, and transferred to San Jose State University in California. A Muslim art professor at San Jose State inspired him to explore the religion of Islam, and after converting, he officially changed his name on November 11, 1997. It was also at San Jose State that he met his future wife, Khadija Ibn-Lahoucine, a Muslim woman of French-Moroccan descent. Together they would have three children: Amine, Hind, and Anas.

Abdul-Wahad played with the Sacramento Kings from 1997 to 1999. He was traded to the Orlando Magic in 1999 and played for the team until 2000. Later in the same year, he was transferred to the Denver Nuggets and played with the team until 2001. Later in 2001, Abdul-Wahad was traded to the Dallas Mavericks and played with the team through the 2002–03 season. Abdul-Wahad struggled with a number

of injuries throughout his career. He remained on Dallas's injured reserve until the 2005 season, when the team released him. In fall 2006, Abdul-Wahad tried out for Climamio Bologna, a professional team in Italy, but was released from training camp on November 28, 2006. Abdul-Wahad retired and entered private life, having earned approximately \$38 million over his career in the NBA.

*Alia Amanda*

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#### **Abdur-Rahim, Shareef (1976– )** *basketball player*

Shareef Abdur-Rahim was a star forward in the NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (NBA) from 1996 to 2008 and one of the more prominent Muslim professional athletes in the United States. Called "Reef" by his family and friends, he was born on December 11, 1976, in Marietta, Georgia, to William and Aminah Abdur-Rahim. His father, a veteran activist in Atlanta's African-American Muslim community, served as the imam of Masjid Al-Mu'minin and president of Atlanta Majlis Ash-Shura, a coordinating body of local Muslim organizations.

Abdur-Rahim played basketball from the age of six, when he found a flyer for a recreational basketball league and begged his father to let him play. Nicknamed by his teammates "the Future," he led Marietta's Joseph Wheeler High School to two consecutive state finals and one championship. He went on to the University of California, Berkeley, where he became the 1995–96 Pac-10 Conference Player of the Year and excelled academically, with a GPA of 3.5. After his freshman year, he decided to become a professional player and, as the third overall NBA draft pick, signed up with the Vancouver Grizzlies in 1996. He immediately distinguished himself as the leader on the team and ranked second among rookies in the NBA. In 2000, he joined the U.S. Olympic Team and helped win the gold medal at the Olympic Games held in Sydney, Australia. Abdur-Rahim has called it the highlight of his athletic career. In 2001, he joined the Atlanta Hawks and, while fasting during the month of Ramadan, scored a career-high 50 points in a game against Detroit. In 2002, he made the NBA All-Star Team and became, at age 25, the sixth-youngest player in NBA history to reach the 10,000-point level. The Hawks traded him to the Portland Trail Blazers in 2004, and in 2005 he joined the Sacramento Kings. He announced his retirement on September 22, 2008.

Abdur-Rahim sees his own impact as transcending sports. In an interview with the *St. Petersburg Times* in 2000, he stated: "If all people can say about a person is he was a [hell] of a basketball player, they did a pretty poor job of living." Charity has been his trademark off the court. When he played for the Grizzlies, he visited hospitals in Vancouver, and as the Kings' star forward, he served Thanksgiving dinners at a Sacramento soup kitchen. In 2001, he established the "Rebound America" program to lead other basketball players into donating funds to the victims of 9/11, which was followed by receiving the NBA Community Assist Award.

Abdur-Rahim has been heavily involved in public service. In 2001, he established the Future Foundation to provide academic, health, fitness, cultural enrichment, and counseling services to young people in southwest Atlanta. In 2004, *Sporting News* named him one of the "Good Guys" in sports for his philanthropic and community work in Atlanta. He extends his vision of social responsibility into his business practices as president of Abdur-Rahim Enterprises, a financial company specializing in investments benefiting underserved communities.

*Timur Yuskaev*

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#### **Abdus-Salaam, Sheila (Sheila Turner)** (1952– ) *New York State appellate judge*

Often considered to be the first prominent female Muslim-American judge, Sheila Abdus-Salaam has served on the bench in both NEW YORK CITY and New York State. She was born Sheila Turner on March 14, 1952, to the working-class parents of seven children in Washington, D.C. Abdus-Salaam decided to become a lawyer at the age of 13 after civil rights lawyer Frankie Muse Freeman visited her school to discuss the freedom riders of the Civil Rights movement. Abdus-Salaam left Washington for college and graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics from New York City's Barnard College in 1974.

Abdus-Salaam, who changed her name when she married a Muslim, stayed in New York, earning her law degree from the Columbia University School of Law in 1977, and was admitted to the bar in New York in 1978. From 1977 to 1980, Abdus-Salaam worked as a staff attorney at Brooklyn Legal Services, which offers legal services to low-income people. In 1980, she was hired as an assistant attorney general for the New York State Department of Law, where she worked until 1988.

In 1988, Abdus-Salaam became general counsel for the City of New York's Division of Labor Services, which ensures the legal compliance of all city contracts. She stayed in this post for three and a half years until she was elected to a 10-year term as judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York. She remained in the civil court only two years, when she won a 14-year term on New York State's Supreme Court for the County of New York on November 2, 1993. She took office on January 1, 1994.

As a supreme court justice, Abdus-Salaam has ruled on cases affecting personal injury litigation, Medicaid benefits for legal immigrants, and mandatory sentencing. She also ruled on perhaps less consequential but more famous cases. In 1996, New York Botanical Garden sued Fordham University over Fordham's plan to build a 480-foot-tall radio tower that would "loom like a giant preying mantis over its grounds." While Abdus-Salaam required the university to trim the tower by 100 feet or move its base by 25 feet, she largely sided with Fordham, writing in her decision that the tower posed no economic injury to the Botanical Gardens: "No suggestion is to be found that petitioner will suffer any significant economic harm. Indeed, there is no perceivable injury unless it is some unredressable, speculative, and unspecified chimera lost in the multiple variants of esthetics." In 1998, the New York State Court of Appeals affirmed her ruling.

In 2004, Abdus-Salaam also played an important role in *Lopez Torres v. New York State Board of Elections*. This time she was called to testify as a witness in federal court. Lopez Torres was attempting to have the New York State system of political conventions declared unconstitutional, and Abdus-Salaam's two-day testimony was regarded as a key component of New York State's defense. It also provided an intimate look at New York State politics.

Explaining how she became a candidate for supreme court justice, Abdus-Salaam said that she was first approached by New York State assemblyman Henry Farrell to run for the post. After she convinced a dozen party officials that she would be a good candidate, the Democratic Party organized the petition drive to place her name on the ballot. She spent only \$2,000 of her own money on the campaign and focused her efforts on raising money from party supporters, attending political club meetings, and introducing herself to the 200 party delegates who would vote in the slate of judicial candidates. At the September 1992 state Democratic judicial convention, she was still uncertain whether she would be a nominee and carefully counted votes on the floor of the convention hall to ensure that she would win. Her success, she said, was attributable, in part, to a party system that allowed open access to people like her who did not have a high net worth.

In 2007, Abdus-Salaam was elected to another 14-year term on the New York State Supreme Court. In addition to her work as a supreme court justice, Abdus-Salaam

has served as president of the New York City chapter of the National Conference of Black Lawyers, chair of the board of directors for Harlem Legal Services, and chair for the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation, an agency that builds affordable housing for low-income residents of the Bronx, New York.

In 2009, New York governor David Paterson appointed Abdus-Salaam to a judgeship in New York State's Appellate Division, First Judicial Department, located in Manhattan.

*Edward E. Curtis IV*

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### **ablution**

Ablution is the purifying ritual of washing Muslims perform before making *salat*, the "prescribed prayers" that involve a series of bodily prostrations and recitation of Qur'anic verses and other sacred words. *Wudu*, or "partial ablution," involves applying clean and pure water to the hands, face, arms up to the elbow, hair, and feet. *Ghusl*, or "complete ablution," involves a more complete washing that is performed after sexual intercourse, the end of a menstrual period, and natural death. *Tayammum*, or "dry ablution," can be done if a Muslim is unable to secure water and involves use of materials that can include soil, sand, clay, and stone.

In North America, ablution by Muslims dates to the era of slavery. While historians have recorded and located accounts of PRAYER conducted by Muslim slaves forcibly taken from Africa in the transatlantic slave trade, accounts of slavery-era ablution omit discussions of whether any preprayer purification occurred. Early ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIM and SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM immigrants, who first came to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and their descendants practiced ablution to varying degrees at homes and mosques. For example, the Moslem Mosque of Highland Park, Michigan—the first purpose-built mosque in the United States, which opened in 1921—had a simple spigot outside for believers to perform their ablutions, though men generally performed them at home before they came. The same was true for men and women in Ross, NORTH DAKOTA, where Muslims began building a mosque in 1929.



In a 1959 ethnographic study of first- and second-generation immigrant Muslims of Lebanese descent living in DETROIT, MICHIGAN, and TOLEDO, OHIO, the sociologist Abdo Elkholy of Northern Illinois University associated the failure to perform ablution at the Toledo mosque with secularization. He wrote that ablution before prayer on Sundays was not institutionalized at the mosque, which had a reputation for liberal interpretations of Islam, and that parents, taking on American patterns that rationalized diminished practice of religious traditions, had explained ablution was not necessary for them due to modern sanitary conditions.

Securing time and space for ablution on the job, multiple times each day, has long been a challenge for Muslim Americans, given that most workplaces have lacked the appropriate facilities in which to do so. Ablution at work has often involved washing one's feet in office bathroom hand sinks, pouring water on one's feet outside, or, when the situation allows, simply dabbing shoes or socks with water.

The right to perform ablution in PRISON, with as few restrictions as possible, has been demanded in a number of lawsuits by Muslim prisoners since 1988. Lower courts, often citing two separate U.S. Supreme Court cases involving prisoners' challenges to prison regulations (*Turner v. Safley* and *O'LONE v. ESTATE OF SHABAZZ*, both 1987), have typically ruled that prison officials are not obligated to let Muslim prisoners use communal bathrooms or showers around the clock for ablution if prisoners can instead perform ablution in their cells, which are equipped with sinks. For example, in *Theus v. Angelone* (1995), the U.S. District Court in the District of Nevada granted summary judgment—meaning that the court made a decision without conducting a full trial—to prison administrators at Ely State Prison in Ely, Nevada, who had been sued for denying Muslim prisoners access to a chapel restroom located near where group prayers occurred during the month of Ramadan. Prison administrators had raised security concerns, contending the prisoners were difficult to monitor when congregated in or near the bathroom. The court ruling stated that the prisoners ought to be able to perform ablution in their cells.

Increased sensitivity to Muslims at many workplaces and universities in the United States since the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, has somewhat altered the attitudes of public institutions and private companies toward footbaths. Footbaths have been installed or low sinks made available for ablution at numerous private businesses, including the Ford Motor Company; at airports in Indianapolis, Indiana, and Kansas City, Missouri, for cab drivers; and at schools of higher education, including the University of Michigan at Dearborn, Minnesota State University, Mankato, and Minnesota Community and Technical College.

The installation of footbaths at public facilities and state universities has occasionally led to protests by non-Muslims

and to written opposition on the INTERNET. The stated concern in these protests often has been that use of taxpayer money for footbaths violates traditions of the separation of church and state. Opponents to the installation of footbaths for students at the University of Michigan at Dearborn in 2007 and for cab drivers at the Indianapolis International Airport in 2007 charged that it amounted to preferential treatment of Muslims.

Stated justifications for installing footbaths have included the argument that they are a relatively nonintrusive accommodation for a growing religious minority; that they are open to Muslims and non-Muslims alike; and that they improve safety and cleanliness, as the use of ordinary hand sinks for foot-washing has concerned non-Muslims and caused splash-related slipping hazards in public bathrooms. At Minnesota Community and Technical College, the administration proposed installing a footbath in 2007 after a Muslim student trying to wash her feet in a bathroom lost her balance and fell.

Jeff Diamant

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### Abou El Fadl, Khaled (1963– ) *Islamic legal scholar, Muslim reformer*

By the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Khaled Medhat Abou El Fadl had become one of the leading authorities on SHARI'AH, or Islamic "law and ethics," in the United States. A prolific author, he has written 10 books and more than 50 articles. Envisioning Islam first and foremost from a moral point of view, he attempted to revive the intellectual heritage of Islamic civilization and established a basis in Islamic tradition for human rights, gender equality, and progressive POLITICS.

Abou El Fadl was born in Kuwait in 1963 to Egyptian parents. He was educated in Kuwaiti secular schools but also attended evening religious studies with some shaykhs, or religious teachers. At an early age, he excelled in religious studies, and by the age of 14 he had memorized the entire QUR'AN. During summer vacations, his father sent him to Egypt for additional religious training, and he received *ijazahs*, or "licenses," from his teachers to teach Islamic jurisprudence; Arabic grammar; and the hadith, or the sayings and deeds of the prophet MUHAMMAD and his companions, among other topics.

At the age of 18, Abou El Fadl came to the United States to attend Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, where

he pursued a bachelor's degree in political science. He was named the "Scholar of the House" in Political Theory, one of Yale's top undergraduate academic honors. After graduating in 1986, he received his law degree (J.D.) from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1989. In 1990, he received a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from Princeton University.

Eventually seeking employment as a law professor, Abou El Fadl served as adjunct professor at the University of Texas Law School in Austin, teaching about Islamic law and commercial laws of the Middle East, from 1996 to 1998. He became a faculty member at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), School of Law in 1998. In the 2003–04 academic year, he was visiting scholar at Yale University, teaching Islamic law and national security law. In the spring of 2006, he served as the Cleveland-Dodge Distinguished Visiting Professor at the American University of Cairo. Later that year, he was named to the Omar and Azmeralda Alfi Endowed Chair in Islamic Law at UCLA. In 10 years of academic work, he had established credibility for the study of Islamic legal traditions in U.S. law schools—outside the sphere of Near Eastern, history, and religion departments.

In the 21st century, Abou El Fadl became a prominent Muslim-American voice in U.S. public affairs. From 2002 to 2005, he sat on the board of directors of Human Rights Watch, a leading nongovernmental organization that documents human rights abuses around the globe. In 2003, President George W. Bush appointed him a member of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, on which he served until 2007. That year, he received the University of Oslo Human Rights Award in recognition of his contributions to the study of human rights. In addition to his public service on various boards, Abou El Fadl provided expert testimony in legal cases related to human rights, political asylum, national security, and international and commercial laws, testifying before the 9/11 Commission regarding the infamous practice of "extraordinary rendition," the removal of suspects overseas for harsh interrogation.

Abou El Fadl's intellectual contributions to the study and public understanding of shari'a both in the United States and around the Islamic world have been noted for their rigor and creativity. Abou El Fadl has developed standards for the analysis, research, and interpretation of shari'a, asserting that it is "a sophisticated legal system" that requires deep and thorough analysis before a scholar can claim to talk in its name. In *The Great Theft*, he defined and outlined the difference between "moderate" and "puritan/extremist" Muslims on key points of Islamic theology and practice. Reinterpreting the terms *authoritarian* and *authoritative* in the Islamic tradition, Abou El Fadl became a vocal critic of WAHHABISM, a socially and intellectually conservative interpretation of Islam especially popular in Saudi Arabia, and called it a threat to the development of the Islamic tradition. He asked all Muslims to take

a self-critical and introspective view of their own tradition and system of beliefs so that they might unearth the beauty of a faith that lies underneath the extremist practices of some radical Muslims. According to him, Muslims should have the courage to delineate the reality of their current thought and develop a program for reform that reestablishes Islam as a humanistic moral force in the world.

Said Abdelrahman

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### Addeynu Allahe Universal Arabic Association

The Addeynu Allahe Universal Arabic Association (AAUAA), a Sunni Muslim organization comprised of African Americans, was founded in New Jersey in August 1938 by MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN (1886–1957). Ezaldeen, a former governor of the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America in DETROIT, MICHIGAN, during the 1920s, studied Islam from 1931 to 1936 at the General Centre World Youngmen Muslims Association in Cairo, Egypt. In tandem with several other AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM movements in the 1920s and 1930s, the AAUAA furthered the popularity of Islam as a religious, political, and economic response to racism and the problems faced by African Americans during the era of legal segregation, which lasted until the 1960s.

The AAUAA was perhaps the first African-American Muslim organization to develop and implement a Sunni Islamic studies curriculum among African Americans, but like many other early African-American Muslim organizations, it also stressed the need for a strong racial and ethnic identity among African Americans. Ezaldeen taught that

blacks were descendants of the biblical figure Ham, one of Noah's sons, whom Ezaldeen identified as an Arab. He said that African Americans were thus members of a larger Arab nation whose proper religion was Islam.

The first chapter of the AAUAA was formally chartered in Camden, New Jersey, in August 1938, though this chapter was never as successful as the second, created in October 1938 in West Valley, New York. The group was formally incorporated on November 22, 1938, and full membership cost \$100. Attempting to form an agrarian community devoted to Islamic ideals and to the economic independence of African Americans, AAUAA members established a farm in the area called Hemlock Hill, or Jabul Arabiyyah, "Mountain of Arabic-Speaking People." By 1946, the AAUAA corporately owned 331 acres of land, while nine individual members owned an additional 131 acres. Much of the capital used to purchase the corporate farm in 1941 came from members who worked in steel mills and foundries around Buffalo. Approximately 40 residents lived in 15 houses, and residents built a temporary school and "house of wisdom," or place of worship.

At some point—it is unclear when—Ezaldeen moved from the Buffalo area to Philadelphia, where there was a unit of the AAUAA, and then in 1940 or 1941, to NEWARK, NEW JERSEY. From his headquarters on Newark's Prince Street, Ezaldeen expanded the AAUAA into a national organization, becoming one of the largest African-American Sunni groups of the 1940s. In addition to the chapters in Philadelphia, Buffalo, and Newark, AAUAA followers could be found in New York; Jacksonville, Florida; and Youngstown, Ohio. Another AAUAA farm, known as Ezaldeen Village, was established in southern New Jersey in 1943. The 1940s were the movement's heyday, and the membership dwindled by the early 1950s.

Ezaldeen died in 1957, and various claimants to Ezaldeen's legacy emerged, including Akeel Karam and Hesham Jaaber. In the 1960s, Jaaber, who had studied ARABIC and Islam, became the national leader of the AAUAA, and the headquarters of the movement was transferred from Newark to Ezaldeen Village, the farm in southern New Jersey. In the same period, Akeel Karam performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and established his own mosque in Newark, but by the late 1960s, there was little of the original AAUAA structure to manage. Many of its former members went on to join other Muslim groups.

From its origins in the late 1930s through the 1940s, the AAUAA played a pivotal role in the spread of Islamic religion in the United States. Like many other black Muslim groups during that era, the AAUAA linked the struggle for dignity and freedom to a black ethnic identity grounded in Islam. Like other groups, it saw economic independence as key to the liberation of African Americans. Where it differed was in its emphasis on a Sunni interpretation of Islam. Along with

the followers of Wali Akram and Daoud Ahmed Faisal, it represented the first major community of African Americans to practice Sunni Islam since the era of slavery.

*M. Naeem Nash with Edward E. Curtis IV*

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### adhan

On December 11, 1893, the *New York Times* heralded one of the first documented *adhans*, or "public calls to Muslim prayer," in the United States. The muezzin, John Lant, stood at a third-story window of the Union Square Bank building in NEW YORK CITY to deliver the traditional call, which the *Times* marked as a significant event in the city's cosmopolitan history. In North America, the *adhan* has functioned to mark the unique presence of Islamic identity within American communities and as a link for believers of their belonging within the broader Muslim world on a global level. The *adhan* has also served to bridge the secular worlds of American home and work life with religious participation at the mosque.

The *adhan*, meaning "announcement" or "proclamation" in Arabic, has historically served to interrupt life five times a day in communities throughout the Islamic world in order to remind the faithful of their duties of prayer to God. Its structural style is similar to Qur'anic recitation, and the proclamaant, called a *mu'adhdhin* ("muezzin"), usually trains formally for his role in what many consider an Islamic art. Usually vocalized outdoors, the *adhan* is followed by another abridged call within the mosque, the *iqama*, meaning "rising up." The *iqama*, often recited by a congregant, urges believers to form rows for communal prayer. In some ways similar to the use of church bells in Christianity, the *adhan* is also distinct from other religious traditions as a summons in its use of the human voice. Muslim history recounts that the prophet Muhammad and his companions officially instated a vocal recitation after initially considering the wooden clapper and ram's horn used in Christian and Jewish rituals.

The *adhan* is also significant in that it contains the Islamic testimony (*shahada*), the first of the Five Pillars of Islam. There are a few small differences between the Sunni and Shi'a *adhan*, as well as a few variations among different Sunni schools of thought regarding how many times the "formulas" (phrases) are to be recited. In the Sunni tradition, there are seven formulas, of which the sixth is a repetition of the first: 1) God



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is most great [recited four times] 2) I testify that there is no god but God [recited twice] 3) I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of God [twice] 4) Come to the prayer [twice] 5) Come to the prosperity [twice] 6) God is most great [twice] 7) There is no god but God [once]. Also, for the early morning prayer, the formula "Prayer is better than sleep" is inserted (and recited twice) between formulas 5 and 6. In the Shi'a tradition, the basic structure of the *adhan* is similar except that the last phrase is recited twice, and several other phrases are oftentimes inserted. For example, "I testify that Ali is the friend of God" and "I testify that Ali is the proof of God" can be inserted between formulas 3 and 4 above (and recited twice each), and the phrase "Come to the best work" can be inserted between formulas 5 and 6 (and also recited twice).

Traditionally, the muezzin would ascend to the top of a mosque or a minaret facing Mecca to recite the *adhan*. Currently, especially in urban areas with a lot of traffic and other noise congestion, a microphone is used or a recording is played from the mosque over loudspeakers. However, there has been significant controversy in some U.S. communities about the *adhan* disturbing non-Muslim neighborhood residents. Some argue that the prayer call adds to general "noise pollution," that it is a form of proselytizing, and that it impinges on the principle of secularism in American public space. Advocates of *adhan* proclamation argue that it exercises verbal and religious expression, part of the fabric of freedom in American society. They see the arguments against the *adhan* as religious intolerance and cultural exclusivism. Approaches to the issue differ across communities. In the end, it is usually the individual city council that decides upon the parameters of the *adhan* presence.

Especially heated debates have received national media coverage, such as the performance of an *adhan* on the Harvard University Campus during Islam Awareness Week in February 2008. Most notably in Hamtramck, Michigan, an amendment was proposed to the city's noise ordinance in May 2004 to make an exception for the Bangladeshi Al-Islah Mosque and its loudspeakers. This was met with fierce protest by residents of the historically Polish neighborhood, many of whom circulated petitions and even threatened lawsuits. In most cases, though, mosques resolve to call the prayer within the mosque or at one time during daylight hours, such as the Friday noon prayer. In some cases, the *adhan* is allowed outside as long as it does not exceed a maximum decibel level nor can be heard past a certain distance from the mosque of origin.

Karima W. Abidine

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## African-American Muslims

African-American Muslims have had a longer and deeper impact on the domestic history of the United States than any other racial or ethnic Muslim group. They were the first Muslims to arrive on American shores and the first indigenous group of Americans to convert, or "revert," to Islam in any large numbers. They were the first Muslims to develop national networks of mosques and Islamic centers. African-American Muslims such as MALCOLM X and MUHAMMAD ALI also played crucial roles in the nation's struggles over civil rights, black power, and the Vietnam War. In the 1990s, African-American Muslims SIRAJ WAHHAJ and W. D. MOHAMMED were the first Muslims to offer prayers before sessions of both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate, and in the 21st century, African-American Muslims KEITH M. ELLISON and ANDRÉ D. CARSON were the first Muslims elected to the U.S. Congress. Such "firsts" testify to the unique and vital place of African-American Muslims in U.S. history.

### THE FIRST BLACK MUSLIMS

Enslaved African Muslims may have constituted 10 to 15 percent of the slave population in the Americas. AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES produced Arabic writing, and stories of individual enslaved African Muslims such as those of ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA and JOB BEN SOLOMON reveal important aspects of U.S. history. Many scholars of African-American Islam believe, however, that only scattered traces and family memories of Islam remained among later African Americans. The descendants of African Muslims in the United States were subjected to intense

pressures to convert to Christianity and to assimilate into the broader American culture.

Islam among African Americans developed in the 20th century from two main sources: first, from indigenous Muslim movements within black communities, and second, from contacts with immigrant Muslims. Indigenous movements used some of the symbols, rituals, and beliefs of Islam in combination with other African-American traditions to produce movements such as NOBLE DREW ALI's MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America. In the midst of the large-scale black migrations to the Northeast and Midwest in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Timothy Drew, a black deliveryman, began preaching on the street corners of NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, in 1913. As a leader of the Canaanite Temple, he reversed the popular understanding of the Biblical story of the "curse of Ham." Canaan was the son of Ham, who was the son of Noah, and in the popular understanding of this Old Testament story, Ham and his children represented the nations of color, while Noah's other sons, Shem and Japheth, represented the Semitic and European races. Canaan, who was cursed in the story due to Ham's sin, was often associated with Africans and African Americans. Slavery and racial oppression were often justified by the biblical "curse of Ham." Drew began to reverse this view by arguing that the Canaanites were the original people of Asia who had populated Africa and created great civilizations. Viewing black people as "Asiatics" also facilitated their identification with other peoples of color, in particular other Muslim peoples.

Influenced by Marcus Garvey's black nationalist back-to-Africa movement, the United Negro Improvement Association, Drew established the Moorish Science Temple in Chicago in 1925, changed his name to Noble Drew Ali, and called himself the Prophet. As a prophet to redeem his fallen people, Drew Ali's central message was nationalistic and religious: Black people, he argued, had lost their national identity through slavery, and their redemption was to reclaim "their forefathers' divine and national principles," namely Moorish nationality and the religion of Islam. Drew Ali followers often added "Bey" or "El" to their names to indicate that they were members of the Moorish Science Temple. Drew Ali used some of the trappings of normative Islam but essentially created his own religion of Moorish Science.

Drew Ali developed his own QUR'AN, and his teachings and worship services combined both Islamic and Christian elements. The Islamic practices included Friday as the day of worship, prayer three times a day with palms outstretched, and a prohibition on eating pork or drinking alcohol. For members of the Moorish Science Temple, the term *Islam* meant "peace," and followers greeted each other saying "Islam." Christian influences were found in some of the scriptures that were read, personal testimonies, preaching, and singing popular hymns, such as "This Little Light of



Ahmadi missionary Muhammad Sadiq found that men and women were attracted to his message that Islam could be a source of black pride and racial equality. In this 1923 photograph titled "Four American Moslem Ladies," these African-American women are wearing clothes that combine South Asian and American styles of dress. (*Muslim Sunrise*, January 1923, p. 165)

Mine" and "Got That Old Time Moslem Religion." Drew Ali's Moorish Science Temple spread rapidly through 15 states. Drew Ali's identification of African Americans as Canaanites also evolved so that he finally called them *Cushites*, another biblical term referring to Africans as creators of great civilizations. After his death in 1929, his movement split into contending factions, while other members joined the Nation of Islam, and a few found their way to Sunni Islam.

While the Moors became the first to introduce aspects of Islam to black communities, in 1920, the Ahmadiyya movement sent missionaries to the United States, who began to proselytize among African Americans. Founded in India in 1889 by Ghulam Ahmad, who was a self-proclaimed

“Mahdi,” or Muslim “messiah,” who also claimed to be a new prophet of Islam, the Ahmadiyya were a sect of Islam that was concerned with interpretations of the Christian gospel and with the notion of a continued prophecy beyond the prophet MUHAMMAD of Arabia. As an energetic missionary movement, the Ahmadiyya first sent missionaries to West Africa, then later to the United States. Although it was relatively unknown and unnoticed, the Ahmadiyya mission movement is significant in that it provided one of the first contacts for African Americans with a worldwide sectarian Islamic group, whose traditions were connected to those of Muslims in Africa, Europe, and Asia.

Ahmadi leader P. Nathaniel Johnson, or Ahmad Din as he was known, was influential in converting Walter Gregg, who became one of the first African-American converts to Sunni Islam, and changed his name to WALI AKRAM. After a period of studying the Qur'an and Arabic with Ahmad Din, Akram founded the First Cleveland Mosque in 1933. Although he eventually became independent of the Ahmadiyya movement, Akram continued to use teaching materials published by the Ahmadiyya. He taught Islam to several generations of midwesterners, including many African Americans.

#### BLACK SUNNI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

During the first half of the 20th century, the diversity of Islamic practices among African American grew dramatically. The number of Ahmadi African Americans increased, as did the number of Moorish Science Temple members. At the same time, several different Sunni Muslim groups emerged in black America, often as a result of Ahmadi and Moorish Science Temple members forming new Muslim groups.

In the late 1920s, for example, James Lomax Bey, one of Noble Drew Ali's chief lieutenants and head of the Detroit Temple, reportedly received permission from Drew Ali to go abroad to Turkey to learn more about Islam. Since Turkey was undergoing its process of secularization, Lomax Bey was directed to Egypt's University of al-Azhar, where he was said to have learned rudimentary Arabic and the rituals of Sunni Islam. After his experience abroad, he returned to the United States and called himself MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN. He began teaching Islam to small groups in NEW YORK CITY and Newark, New Jersey, when he was called to become a teacher to a group of African Americans in Buffalo, New York, who wanted to learn more about Islam. In 1933, Ezaldeen and his wife moved to Buffalo and lived there for about 10 years.

In 1938, Ezaldeen convinced the members in Buffalo to buy 300 acres of land in the nearby rural area of West Valley, New York, and to establish a new community of Muslims. “Jabul Arabiyya,” or the “Arab Mountain,” became the official name of the small community of African-American Muslims who built houses on the land, farmed it, and continue to live there today. Ezaldeen formed several organizations,

including the Uniting Islamic Societies of America in 1943. Ezaldeen traveled continuously among the various early African-American Sunni Muslim groups that were formed in black communities in Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York City, and Buffalo in the 1920s and 1930s. After an internal dispute with members of the Buffalo community in the mid-1940s, Ezaldeen returned to Newark and established another rural community of Muslims in southern New Jersey, which took the name “Ezaldeen Village.” They built a mosque, and more than 20 families built houses on land purchased by the community. The idea that African Americans were identified as “Cushites” was one of the few ideas that Ezaldeen kept from his Moorish Science Temple experience. African-American Muslims influenced by Ezaldeen continue to identify as Cushites today. Perhaps as early as the 1920s, but certainly by 1939, another small group of SUNNI MUSLIM AMERICANS led by Sheikh Daoud Ahmad Faisal, an African-American man with ties to the Caribbean, established the Islamic Mission to America on State Street in Brooklyn. At the State Street Mosque, Sheikh Daoud taught Sunni Islam to African Americans, encouraging them to mingle with Muslims from Africa, Asia, and Europe who attended his mosque for Friday prayers. He was a powerful preacher who proselytized in the style of an evangelical Christian missionary, warning believers that they must convert and practice Islam in order to be saved in this world and the next.

The work of the Ahmadiyya movement; Sheik Daoud's Islamic Mission to America and the State Street Mosque in New York City; Imam Wali Akram of the First Cleveland Mosque of Cleveland; and Ezaldeen's rural Muslim communities, Jabul Arabiyya and Ezaldeen Village, were all essential institutions in the spread and development of Islam among black Americans from 1920 to WORLD WAR II. From World War II through the 1960s, however, African-American conversion to Islam and the identification of non-Muslim African Americans with Islamic traditions and history proceeded at an even greater pace. Several Sunni Islamic and indigenous African-American Muslim groups are responsible for this growth, among them the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood, the Darul Islam movement, and the ISLAMIC PARTY OF NORTH AMERICA.

The Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood (MIB) in Harlem was conceived in 1964 by Khalid Ahmad Tawfiq, who was then a student at the al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. Tawfiq was his father's name, given to him after he and several relatives joined the Moorish Science Temple. Khalid Ahmad Tawfiq attended the DeWitt Clinton High School in New York City. However, Tawfiq was greatly influenced by NATION OF ISLAM minister Malcolm X and became a member of Malcolm's Muslim Mosque, Inc., where he converted to Islam at age 17. Although Tawfiq admired the black nationalism of the Nation of Islam, he rejected many



of the organization's theological and racial teachings. During his international travels in early 1964, Malcolm X made arrangements for Tawfiq—one of the youngest members of the Muslim Mosque, Inc., and whom he fondly referred to as the “little samurai” because of his small stature and expertise in the martial arts—to study at al-Azhar University on a scholarship. Tawfiq and Akbar Muhammad, Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad's youngest son, studied at al-Azhar from 1964 to 1967. They were both expelled for participating in protests against Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser's increasingly repressive policies.

The MIB was officially founded in Harlem in 1967 upon Tawfiq's return to the United States. Among African-American Sunni Muslim groups, the MIB was unique because it melded Sunni Islamic teachings with the nationalistic concerns of African Americans. Tawfiq felt that nationhood was a common thread, and he taught his followers that they could properly identify with their African heritage and still be authentically Islamic as long as they did not reject people of other races. Influenced by his father, who was a member of Moorish Science, he called his followers Cushites, the first builders of civilization.

Tawfiq's vision of nationhood was deeply influenced by Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association and Hassan al-Bana's Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt. Following Garvey, the MIB developed its own unique red, black, and green flag showing a crescent and star and a curved sword with acknowledgments to Allah written in Arabic script. In 1971, he published the first issue of *Western Sunrise*, the newspaper of the MIB. In 1986, Sheikh Tawfiq was diagnosed with Parkinson disease, and he died in December 1988. Led in the 21st century by Imam Talib Abdur Rashid, the MIB has established its own school for children and communal living quarters for members in several buildings in central Harlem.

The Darul Islam movement began in 1962 among dissatisfied African-American members of the Sheikh Daoud's State Street Mosque in Brooklyn. Rajab Mahoud, Yahya Abdul Karim, Ishaq A. Shaheed, and a few other dedicated African-American Muslims often met for Friday prayers at State Street. They gradually organized themselves under the charismatic leadership of Yahya Abdul Karim, who was chosen as the imam, or “prayer leader.” In 1968, this new group left the State Street Mosque and established their own permanent mosque at 240 Sumpter Street in Brooklyn. Sensing the dissatisfaction with the lack of indigenous African-American leadership, organization, and community outreach programs at the State Street Mosque, Imam Karim instituted the Darul Islam, or the “House of Islam,” and called for the establishment of the kingdom of God on Earth, where the SHARI‘A, or “Islamic law and ethics,” would be established as the governing legislation.

Each member of the Darul Islam movement had to take a *bayat*, or “pledge,” to the imam to work and struggle to establish this kingdom of God on Earth. Members also worked to keep the mosque open 24 hours a day for the five daily prayers. The deeply faithful and trustworthy members were those who came daily for the early morning and evening prayers. The mosque also held classes in Arabic and the fundamentals of Islam and developed community service programs. The movement spread to Cleveland, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia. A network of more than 40 mosques was developed between 1968 and 1982. Then, in 1979, a Pakistani Sufi teacher, Sheikh Mubarik Ali Jilani, became part of the Darul Islam movement. In 1982, the movement split, and this sheikh led a faction called al-Fuqura, meaning that they were the poor but righteous followers of God. Some refused to follow Jilani because they wanted a leader who was African American.

After the schism in 1982, the Darul Islam movement declined in influence, but it was revived under the charismatic leadership of Imam JAMIL ABDULLAH AL-AMIN (the former H. Rap Brown of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party) in Atlanta. Imprisoned on weapons charges, Brown converted to Islam at Riker's Island, following a path that many incarcerated African Americans had trod before. Imam Amin gathered 30 to 40 communities who pledged to follow his leadership. He refused to use the name Darul Islam, calling his group the “Community Mosque movement” instead, but he still identified with Darul Islam's call to establish the kingdom of God in the United States. Jamil has emphasized the need for his followers to keep the five daily prayers and to keep the mosque open for such prayer on a 24-hour basis. Another new Islamic movement among African Americans in this period was the Islamic Party, established in 1971 by Yusuf Muzzafruddin Hamid, a jazz musician from Atlanta, Georgia, who had originally converted to Islam at the State Street Mosque. As he gained more knowledge of Sunni Islam and Islamic REVIVALISM, Muzzafruddin became dissatisfied with the lack of community outreach of the ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C. According to Hamid, the majority of immigrant Arabs were not proselytizing sufficiently among the large community of African Americans who were showing an increased interest in Islam. Muzzafruddin formed Masjid al-Umma, or the “Community Mosque,” in 1969 and created the Islamic Party two years later.

In 1974, the headquarters of the Islamic Party moved closer to Howard University in Washington and converted many Howard students. During this period, there was an atmosphere of fervor and enthusiasm among the members, who often put in long hours doing *da'wa*, or “missionary work,” community service, or organizing. For some African Americans dissatisfied with the social progress made in

the wake of the Civil Rights movement, Islam became a path to social, political, and religious liberation. For them, Islam embodied a total way of life in which religion, politics, economics, and social relations were melded in an orderly fashion. Islam was the means of liberating people from their oppression. In ensuing years, branches of the Islamic Party were formed in other cities, including Chicago, Akron, Pittsburgh, New York City, Houston, and New Orleans. In 1977, Islamic Party members and their families and eventually the headquarters moved to Connally, Georgia, where the party had bought some rural farmland. The decision caused the movement to split and fissure into different factions. Another rural village called "New Medina" was established in Tate, Georgia. Muzzafuruddin and some others lived there until he died of an illness in 1991.

### THE NATION OF ISLAM

While the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood, the Darul Islam movement, and the Islamic Party all did their part in the spread of Islamic religion among African Americans after World War II, no organization played a more important role in this story than the Nation of Islam (NOI). Established in 1930 in Detroit by a mysterious peddler of sundry goods, W. D. FARD, who became known as W. F. Muhammad and various other names, the NOI taught that Islam, the true religion of the black men of Asia and Africa, would liberate black people from white oppression. Encouraging his followers to attain true "knowledge of self," Fard told his followers that they were not Americans, owed no allegiance to the American flag, and should refuse to vote or serve in the American military. Instead, they were citizens of the Lost-Found Nation of Islam, which had the goal of establishing a separate nation for black people somewhere in the United States or in Africa.

Elijah Poole (1897–1975), Fard's trusted lieutenant, joined the Nation of Islam in 1931 and was given the Muslim name ELIJAH MUHAMMAD. When Fard mysteriously disappeared in 1934, a schismatic struggle for the leadership of the Nation of Islam occurred. Elijah Muhammad moved his family and close followers to the south side of Chicago, where Temple of Islam No. 2 was established as the headquarters of the movement. He reshaped the Nation of Islam by establishing the doctrine that Master Fard was "Allah," or God in the flesh, and that he, the "Honorable" Elijah Muhammad, was the anointed "Messenger of Allah," beliefs that most other Muslims consider to be heretical. Under Muhammad's guidance, the NOI taught followers to pursue economic independence through the development of black-owned small businesses. "Do for Self" became the rallying cry of the movement, which encouraged self-reliance. Hard work, frugality, the avoidance of debt, self-improvement, and a conservative lifestyle enabled Muhammad and his followers to

establish more than 100 temples nationwide, innumerable grocery stores, restaurants, bakeries, and other small businesses, and its own farms.

Stressing the slogan "know yourself," Muhammad also taught that the vulnerabilities of the black psyche stemmed from a confusion of identity and self-hatred. White racism was the cause; the cure was the formation of a separate black nation, separate schools, separate social networks, and separate places of worship. Muhammad taught that the white man is a "devil by nature," unable to respect anyone who is not white, and that he is the historic and persistent source of harm and injury to black people.

Malcolm Little (1925–65) converted to the Nation of Islam in prison in 1948 and became known as MALCOLM X. Dropping one's surname and taking on an "X," standard practice in the movement, was an outward symbol of inward changes: It meant ex-Christian, ex-Negro, and ex-slave and also signified the fact that one's true name was lost as a result of slavery. A charismatic minister, Malcolm X expanded the membership of the NOI by establishing 27 temples across the country, in addition to the seven that were in existence in 1952, and founding the NOI's newspaper, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, in the basement of his home. Malcolm rose rapidly in the ranks, first becoming the minister of the Boston Temple No. 11, then being appointed the minister of Temple No. 7 in Harlem. He also became the national representative of the Nation of Islam, second in rank to Elijah Muhammad.

Malcolm's keen intellect, incisive wit, and ardent radicalism made him a formidable critic of American society and the Civil Rights movement, challenging Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s central notions of "integration" and "nonviolence." His biting critique of the "so-called Negro" and his emphasis on the recovery of black self-identity and economic independence of the black community provided the intellectual foundations for the Black Power and black consciousness movement of the late 1960s and 1970s. In contrast to King's nonviolence, Malcolm urged his followers to defend themselves "by any means possible." He also articulated the bitterness and rage felt by the dispossessed black masses, the "grassroots." In 1964, however, Malcolm criticized Elijah Muhammad, left the Nation of Islam, performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, and became a Sunni Muslim. He remained a strong advocate of both black nationalism and anticolonialism but associated himself with the branch of Islamic religion practiced by the vast majority of Muslims. He was assassinated in February 1965.

Many in the NOI rejected Malcolm's criticism of Elijah Muhammad and the NOI, including boxing champ MUHAMMAD ALI, who remained loyal to the "Messenger" throughout the 1960s. Though the memory of a slain Malcolm X inspired secularly minded black power advocates, Ali remained the most recognizable and arguably influential

symbol of black Muslims to most black—and white—people. Ali's 1967 refusal to be inducted into the UNITED STATES MILITARY during the era of Vietnam dealt a severe blow to the government's efforts to justify the war. Ali was banned from boxing as a result but remained unapologetic. Ali opposed joining the military on the basis that his beliefs in the NOI prohibited him from serving in the army; Ali also famously said that "no Vietcong ever called me nigger," signifying that the United States lacked the moral authority to prosecute a war for democracy abroad when it did not practice democracy at home.

After Elijah Muhammad died in 1975, his son W. D. MOHAMMED was chosen to be his successor as the chief minister of the NOI. Two months after he took over, Mohammed announced that "there is no white Muslim nor black Muslim, all are Muslims, children of God." He began making radical changes in the structure of the organization and its beliefs by pushing the NOI toward Sunni Islam. He changed his name from Wallace Delaney Muhammad to Warithuddin ("inheritor of the faith") and then to W. D. Mohammed, which he said followed his father's original spelling of his surname.

From 1975, Imam Mohammed changed the name of the movement several times, from the NOI to the World Community of al-Islam in the West (1976), to the American Muslim Mission (1980), to the Muslim American Society (1995), and finally to the American Muslim Society (2000). He also disbanded his movement several times, encouraging his followers to establish independent mosques. However, the majority of mosques still form an identifiable movement, which supported Imam Mohammed's Mosque Cares Ministry. Imam Mohammed's movement has succeeded in the areas of interfaith relations with Roman Catholics and Jews through the international, Catholic-led Focolare movement and in building mixed-income apartments and town houses in New York City. Some of the mosques have been successful in sustaining and expanding the Clara Muhammad Schools, the national network of elementary and secondary schools originally established as "Universities of Islam" under his father's leadership. Estimates of Imam Mohammed's following range from 50,000 to several hundred thousand, meaning that until his death in 2008 he may have had more followers than any other African-American Muslim leader in the first decade of the 21st century.

Not all African-American Muslims, however, agreed with W. D. Mohammed's change of direction. In 1977 and 1978, Minister LOUIS FARRAKHAN, the former Louis Eugene Walcott of Boston, who had expected that he would be chosen as Elijah Muhammad's successor, broke away from W. D. Mohammed's movement, reconstituting the NOI under the teachings of Elijah Muhammad. From 1975 to 1977, Farrakhan traveled extensively in Muslim countries, where he found a need to recover the focus upon race and

black nationalism that the NOI had emphasized earlier. Farrakhan's new NOI, which is based in Chicago, retained the separatist beliefs and doctrines that were central to the teachings of Elijah Muhammad. Minister Farrakhan also displayed much of the charisma of Malcolm X. Other disaffected leaders and followers who formed splinter NOI groups after W. D. Mohammed's changes to the NOI included Silas Muhammad in Atlanta, John Muhammad in Detroit, and Caliph Muhammad in Baltimore. Among splinter groups, Farrakhan's NOI was by far the largest and most dynamic.

Farrakhan's NOI has been successful in getting rid of drug dealers in a number of public housing projects and private apartment buildings through the establishment of a national private security agency for hire, manned by members of the FRUIT OF ISLAM, the NOI's male auxiliary. The NOI has also been at the forefront of organizing peace pacts between gang members in Los Angeles and several other cities. It has established a national prison ministry, a clinic for the treatment of AIDS patients in Washington, D.C., and a cosmetics company, Clean and Fresh. Moreover, the NOI has continued to preach the need for black pride and economic independence.

Under Minister Farrakhan's leadership, the organization has allowed its members to participate in electoral politics and to run for office, actions that were forbidden under Elijah Muhammad. Minister Farrakhan has also appointed female ministers and high-ranking female leaders in the NOI. International branches have been formed in Ghana, London, Paris, and the Caribbean Islands. Farrakhan succeeded in holding the MILLION MAN MARCH in 1995 in Washington, D.C., one of the largest black gatherings in history. In 2005, the NOI duplicated the turnout of more than a million black persons at the Millions More March in Washington. While continuing to stress the importance of Elijah Muhammad's teachings, the organization has also moved closer to Sunni Islam by observing Friday congregational prayers, celebrating Ramadan according to the traditional Islamic lunar calendar, and performing the *salat*, the "prescribed daily prayers" in Islam.

As important as Louis Farrakhan's NOI remained to both non-Muslim and Muslim African Americans, however, the first decade of the 21st century saw a dramatic rise in the public profile of African-American Sunni Muslims. As the events of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, focused attention of the non-Muslim public on the fear of Islamic radicalism among Muslim Americans, African-American Sunni Muslims were already entering mainstream U.S. politics. In the early 2000s, black Muslims not only prayed before the start of Congress, they were also elected to Congress. In 2006, African-American Muslim Keith M. Ellison, Democrat of Minnesota, was the first Muslim ever elected to the House of Representatives; in

a special 2008 election to replace his grandmother, André D. Carson, Democrat of Indiana, was the second.

### CONCLUSION

The practice of Islamic religion among African Americans has never been monolithic. From its roots as a slave religion to its development as a 20th- and 21st-century phenomenon, African-American Islam has not had one set of religious traditions and practices. Such religious diversity fueled the growth and popularity of Islam among black Americans. In the 1900s, black Muslims developed competing institutions that claimed allegiance to many different varieties of Islam and, in so doing, appealed to different segments of black America.

If there is one unifying theme in the history of African-American Islam, perhaps it is the fact that Muslim religious institutions and organizations, like their black Christian counterparts, attempted to address themselves to the whole person. African-American Muslim groups became places where people could seek aid, comfort, and wisdom; they also offered members opportunities to participate in political activity, conduct business, and socialize. In sum, the many black Muslim groups in the United States helped to make Islam not only a set of beliefs and practices but also a political and social identity among those who called themselves Muslim.

Lawrence H. Mamiya

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### Ahmad Din

#### “Living Flora—And Dead” (1924)

*Pioneering scholars of Islamic movements among African Americans often emphasized the political aspects of African-American conversion to Islam. In 1961, C. Eric Lincoln published Black Muslims in America, a book about the Nation of Islam, which asserted that African Americans were not attracted to Islam primarily for religious reasons but rather for social and political reasons. The Nation of Islam, he said, was first and foremost a black nationalist organization, meaning that it advocated an agenda of racial pride and self-determination. This association of Islam with political and social activism spread to American popular culture, and even into the 21st century, many Americans continued to see the Nation of Islam and other early black Muslim groups primarily as political rather than religious movements. More recent scholarship on African-American Muslim history has revealed, however, that black American converts to Islam were attracted to Islam for several reasons, including religious ones.*

*One early example of this is African-American Muslim P. Nathaniel Johnson, who became leader of an Ahmadi Muslim mosque in St. Louis. Johnson, who took the new name of Ahmad Din, said that after examining other religious traditions and sacred texts, he found the Qur'an and the traditions of the prophet Muhammad to be the most enlightening. In “Living Flora—And Dead,” an article Din wrote for the newspaper Muslim Sunrise in 1924, he wrote that the Qur'an taught eternal truths and unveiled secrets about the origins of the universe. He believed that God was both transcendent and immanent and that the religion of Islam helped the ordinary human realize God's greatness and nearness. He saw the prophet Muhammad as a “master spiritualist,” meaning that Muhammad was able to traverse the chasm between the heavens and the Earth to reveal the truth that lay behind all existence.*



In the field of religious literature Mohammed's Koran is the healthiest plant with the hardiest stalk, produces the sweetest bloom and yields the more wholesome fruit.

The soil which gave to it healthy growth was rich beyond comparison. Allah's abundance made its foliage green, its blossoms beautiful, and its yield so heavy that whosoever reaps has but to enjoy an everlasting harvest.

This plant of which I speak, grew from the true seed to maturity; no grafting on of other plants, no artificial irrigation, no pruning to make it trim was necessary, this plant—QURAN!

Other plants in the field of religious literature? Let us review them. Their seeds were true but ah!



look at them now! How sad! Much deliberate meddling has been done.

Perusing a certain Holy Book I found it to be a plant withered, barely being kept alive by artificial watering not at all green—dying! This book, The Torah—Talmud of Judaism. I perused another Holy Book and it was found to be a plant faded, green stems and a few green leaves from true vines grafted on to give it the appearance of life. This book, The Vedas of Hindoos. The perusal of another Holy Book found it to be a plant already dead from too much pruning. This book, The Gospels. Besides these, some others I perused, finding them all decadent (Al Quran) excepted.

The Sun of Tradition glowed dimly down through the clouds of Mythology, the atmosphere was dry, the rainbow hung westward on the horizon signifying also that the life-giving rains had passed. Blasted Gardens! But the Prophet's Quran stood as a lone apple tree among the other trees of the garden. Consider the Holy Prophet and his Koran. Take the sent One all in all, what he was, what he accomplished, and the good he inspired others to do. Compare him with all other poets, law-givers, prophets, sons of God, statesmen, etc.; and the son of Abdallah alone stands above all other men that mankind has call "GREAT."

Other bibles are mostly the works of an aggregation of poets, prophets, prophetesses, statesmen and lawgivers, historically covering thousand of years, crammed full of conflicting statements. The Koran comes straight from the mouth of the man who proves himself to be the "MASTER MIND" of the earth.

The Quran is a poem, a code of laws, a prayer book, and the world's best bible combined. THE MAN UNIQUE! THE BOOK UNIQUE! As in a looking glass we behold the MASTER SPIRITUALIST of the world intoxicated with the gifts of God.

O, ye howlers and spillers of ink! Climb Mount Sinai and swim the river Jordan, baptize yourselves in pools of blood, rattle the dry bones in Ezekiel's valley, but the echo of it all is dead after all allowance is made.

*Sheik Ahmad Din.  
(P. Nathaniel Jo[h]nson)*



Source: *Muslim Sunrise*, January 1924, pp. 14–15.

## African-American Muslim slaves

The first numerically significant group of Muslims to arrive in the Americas came as slaves from West Africa. They were ethnically diverse, tracing their lineage to the Wolof, Tukolor, Fulani, Vai, Mandingo, Hausa, Nago, Nupe, and Soninke ethnic groups or tribes from the current-day countries of Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Mali, Benin, Ghana, and Nigeria. Victims of the transatlantic slave trade that turned as many as 20 million human beings into chattels—commodities to be bought and sold—these Muslims were often the best-educated slaves in the Americas. They struggled to perpetuate their religious identity in the colonial and early national period in the United States without the benefit of the educational institutions, international networks of trade and pilgrimage, and political self-determination that characterized many Muslim communities in West Africa. When they could, they attempted to return to Africa. They also became vital participants in colonial American and U.S. history. Their labor on plantations (including very likely MOUNT VERNON, the farm of President George Washington) helped to fuel the economic success of the South and the entire United States, and their autobiographies and letters recorded some of history's most poignant images and memories of slavery and the desires of African Americans to be free.

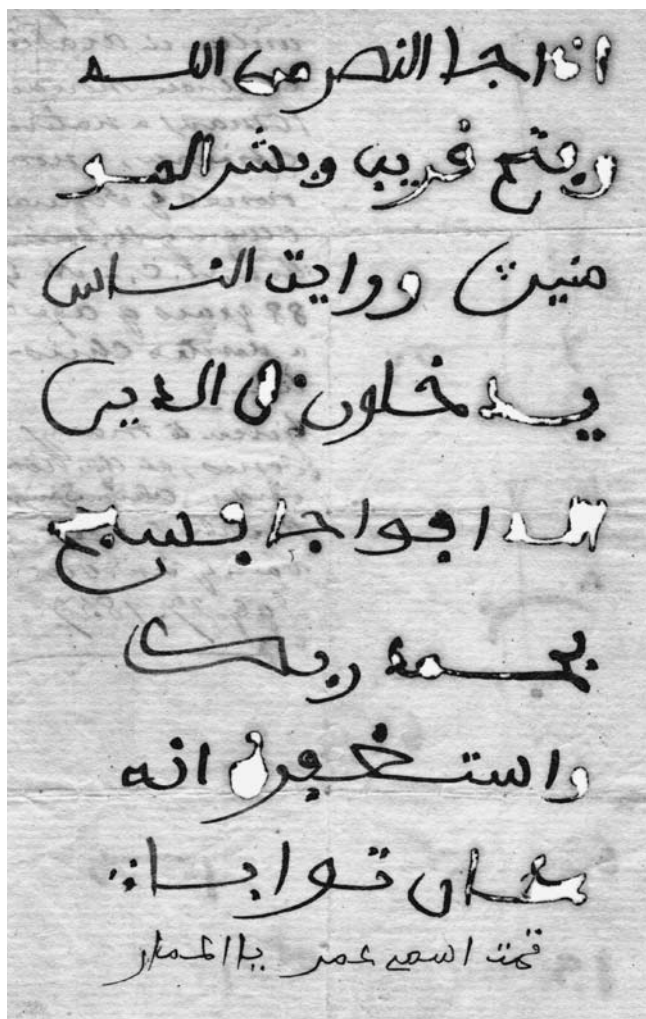
### AFRICAN ORIGINS

Islam reached sub-Saharan Africa as early as the seventh or eighth century. By 1501, when the first Africans were brought to the Americas as slaves, Islam was one of the major religions of West Africa. A small but significant percentage of all slaves brought to the present-day United States were Muslims. African-American Muslim slaves hailed from diverse homelands, from the remnants of the Wolof (Jolof) Empire in present-day Senegal and Gambia to the Bornu Empire in present-day Nigeria.

These individuals belonged to a complex social and cultural environment. They were at once immersed in rituals and customs primarily rooted in Africa and connected to global Muslim networks of trade, diplomacy, and scholarship. Some of them came from nomadic backgrounds, but the majority of them belonged to cultures that embraced literacy, scholarship, CALLIGRAPHY, POETRY, and SUFISM, the mystical branch of Islam in which Muslims cultivate a closer, intimate relationship with God. These African Muslims lived in a world in which ideas and merchandise included imported goods from many parts of the world. In their libraries, they had books by Syrian and Egyptian writers. In their markets, they could buy merchandise not only from local merchants but also from trade caravans coming from regions beyond Africa. Muslim slaves brought to the present-day United

States came from cultures as complex as the one in which they soon found themselves enslaved.

Historian Sylviane A. Diouf has suggested that Muslims—men and women—made up about 15 to 20 percent of the total slave population of North America, South America, and the Caribbean islands, meaning that the total number of Muslim slaves brought to the Americas from the 16th to the 19th centuries numbered 2.2 to 3 million. Other historians have disputed this high percentage, including Allan Austin, who has estimated that of all slaves imported to the thirteen colonies and United States between 1711 and 1808 (the year the United States outlawed the international slave trade),



The last known manuscript of Omar ibn Said, one of several African-American Muslim slaves fluent in Arabic, was written in 1857. The verses, from Qur'an 110–1–3, may be translated as: "When the help of God comes and makes an opening / and you see crowds of people joining the religion of God / Celebrate the praise of your Lord and ask God's forgiveness / And God will forgive." (*Documenting the American South, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries*)

approximately 10 percent, or close to 30,000, were Muslims. Historian Michael Gomez has come to the same conclusion, figuring that of the 481,000 first-generation Africans who were brought to British North America, 255,000—more than half—came from areas in which Muslims lived or ruled. He estimates that thousands or perhaps tens of thousands of African Americans may have had Muslim upbringings.

### ISLAM IN THE AMERICAS

Slavery made it difficult for African-American Muslim slaves to practice their religion. Despite the challenges, however, the memoirs of African-American Muslim slaves and the writings of slave owners, scholars, journalists, and travelers all testify to the perpetuation of Islamic religious rituals among some first-generation Africans in the United States. These Muslims often observed many of the Five Pillars of Islamic practice, including fasting during the month of Ramadan and daily prayer, in addition to wearing identifiably Islamic dress and reciting portions of the QUR'AN.

Some Muslim slaves proudly held on to their religion despite significant pressure to convert to Christianity. Former slave JOB BEN SOLOMON (ca. 1701–ca. 1773), for example, resisted the evangelism of his Anglo-American sponsors by explaining that the Christian teaching about the divinity of Jesus was incorrect. Another slave, ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (ca. 1762–1829), who officially converted to Christianity but secretly remained a Muslim, registered his disapproval with Christianity by noting the hypocrisy of Christian slave owners who used religion as a justification for greed. Others who may or may not have concealed their religious identity as Muslims despite officially converting to Christianity include NICHOLAS SAID (ca. 1831–82), and MAHOMMAH GARDU BAQUAQUA (ca. 1830–?).

The autobiography of OMAR IBN SAID (1770–1864), which was written in 1831, also suggests that some Muslim slaves may have embraced some combination of Islam and Christianity. According to the Rev. Charles Colcock Jones, a Georgia farmer and preacher who wrote *The Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the United States* (1824), some slaves who professed Christianity told him that Christianity and Islam were two expressions of the same religious idea: "God, they say, is Allah, and Jesus Christ is Mohammed—the religion is the same, but different countries have different names."

Whether first-generation African-American Muslim slaves passed on their Islamic religious traditions to their children is more difficult to know. As enslaved persons who were forced to perform manual labor and could be bought or sold at a moment's notice, it would have been nearly impossible to teach one's children or other people's children how to read the Qur'an or interpret the SHARI'A, Islamic laws and ethics. These Islamic traditions generally required the cre-

ation of large-scale institutions that were not established in the United States.

Other Islamic religious traditions, including daily prayers, fasting during the month of Ramadan, preparing certain FOOD associated with Muslims in West Africa, observing Islamic DRESS norms, and engaging in PHILANTHROPY, which were practiced by first-generation African-American Muslim slaves, would have been easier—if not easy—to pass along to children, but few historical documents have been found that prove this phenomenon occurred. In fact, the most significant evidence to suggest the perpetuation of Islamic religious tradition among second-generation African Americans comes from oral history interviews conducted along the GEORGIA SEACOAST in the 1930s by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the GREAT DEPRESSION.

In these WPA interviews, the descendants of Muslim slaves on St. Simons Island and Sapelo Island, Georgia, remembered the African Islamic practices of their grandparents and great-grandparents, suggesting that Islamic traditions were practiced in a communal setting and passed on from one generation to another. The veracity of these oral historical sources is verified partly through the contemporaneous accounts of white slave owners and visitors who noted the presence of Muslim children on these islands in the 1850s.

The fact that various forms of African Islamic practice would have survived in this environment mirrors what is known more generally about the survival of African culture in the Americas. African traditions were most likely to be perpetuated where slaves were relatively isolated, where they were densely populated, and where new Africans continued to arrive. All of these factors obtained in this area of the South. On Sapelo Island during the antebellum era, Muslim slave BILALI OF SAPELO ISLAND, also called Ben Ali, Belali Mahomet, and Bu Allah, fathered a large family and supervised the labor of hundreds of fellow slaves. Using African know-how, these slaves cultivated cotton, sugarcane, and rice. Bilali's owners, the Spaulding family, credited him with preparing slaves to fight off the British in the War of 1812 and evacuating them to safety during the hurricane of 1824.

Like other relatively elite slaves, Bilali was literate in Arabic, and though he could not pass along Arabic literacy to his children, he did raise them as Muslims. In the 1930s, Sapelo Island resident Katie Brown, the great-granddaughter of Bilali, recalled the names of Bilali's daughters, some who were given Anglo names such as Margaret and others who were named Medina and Fatima, which were African and Muslim in origin. Brown said that, according to her grandmother, both Bilali and his wife, Phoebe, prostrated themselves in prayer toward the East on a regular basis in addition to "praying on the bead," meaning that they used

Muslim prayer beads to recite their *DHIKR*, or "religious litanies." Muslims in these coastal areas also observed Islamic holidays, wore turbans and veils, and prepared food associated with African Muslims.

What these practices meant to African Americans is more difficult to know. Even if their origin was African Islamic, their meaning might have changed in the United States. In addition, some African religious traditions were associated both with Islam and with African traditional religions, a concept that religious studies scholars have used to describe the varied but similar indigenous religious traditions of West Africa. For example, the use of amulets, often kept on one's person to heal one from sickness or bring one fortune, was both an African Muslim and an African traditional practice.

At least some slaves combined practices from these religious traditions. According to a WPA interview with Nero Jones, his forebears on the Georgia seacoast celebrated the harvest by beating drums, shaking rattles, and performing the ring shout—a counterclockwise dance—all of which were aspects of African traditional religion, but his aunt and uncle also used Muslim prayer beads and recited some of their prayers in Arabic. Others used Islamic rituals along with elements of African-American traditions of hoodoo or conjure, the folk religious practice of healing and harming that involves the use of material objects—sometimes pejoratively seen as magic and superstition.

## CONCLUSION

African-American Muslim slave contributions to the United States are, at once, obvious and concealed. It is clear that thousands of African-American Muslims in the thirteen colonies and the United States contributed their agricultural knowledge and labor toward the building of a successful American economy. At least a few of them, if not more, were more educated than the average American, white or black. These elites wrote irreplaceable slave narratives, in both English and Arabic, that illuminate the history of the United States. Many of them also prayed, fasted, gave charity, used Muslim amulets, and performed other Islamic religious traditions, leaving behind a rich religious legacy. But aspects of African-American Muslim contributions are also hidden, part of a multicultural African heritage that shaped American culture. From food to clothes, music, GULLAH language, and more, the legacy of African Muslims is tied inextricably to the American story as a whole.

*Edward E. Curtis IV and Ali Altaf Mian*

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### Interview with Katie Brown of Sapelo Island (1930s)

*Among the available historical sources that document the presence of Muslims among African-American slaves are interviews conducted with their descendants who lived on the islands off the Georgia coast. Employed by the Works Progress Administration during the Great Depression in the 1930s, the scholars and writers who traveled to St. Simons Island and Sapelo Island, among other relatively isolated locales, were looking for evidence of African cultural traditions that had been retained by black Americans. They discovered that African Islam had been a part of the cultural mix. The interview with Sapelo Island resident Katie Brown is rendered in Gullah, an English dialect developed by African Americans along the coast of the southeastern United States. That language captures, in a way that a translation into standard English never could, a sense of how these African Americans actually spoke. Brown was the great-granddaughter of Bilali of Sapelo*

*Island, the Muslim patriarch of an African-American Muslim family. In her interview, which took place when Brown was elderly, Brown says that her grandmother wore a veil and that her grandfather may have had more than one wife. She also notes how her ancestors would use a string of beads (like a rosary) to perform meritorious Islamic prayers and how, during the annual harvest festival, her mother would make rice cakes for the community to share.*



One of the oldest inhabitants is Katie Brown, whose grandmother, Margaret, was a daughter of Belali Mohomet, the Mohammedan [Muslim] slave driver of Thomas Spalding. Katie, sunning herself on the back steps of her small house, was disposed to be gracious to us. Shaking her head at the size of the shoes brought to her as an incentive to conversation, she relented at the sight of some pipe tobacco and began to talk. . . .

Knowing that Katie was a descendant of Belali, we asked her if she knew anything of him. She nodded and answered, "Belali Mohomet? Yes'm, I knows bout Belali. He wife Phoebe. He hab plenty daughtuhs, Magret, Bentoo, Chaalut, Medina, Yaruba, Fatima, an Hestuh.

"Magret an uh daughtuh Cotto use tuh say dat Belali an he wife Phoebe pray on duh bead. Dey wuz bery puhticluh bout duh time dey pray an dey bery regluh bout duh hour. Wen duh sun come up, wen it straight obuh head an wen it set, das duh time dey pray. Dey bow tuh duh sun an hab lill mat tuh kneel on. Duh beads is on a long string. Belali he pull bead an he say, 'Belambi, Hakabara, Mahamadu.' Phoebe she say, 'Ameen, Ameen.'

"Magret she say Phoebe he wife, but maybe he hab mone one wife. I spects das bery possible. He come obuh wid all he daughtuhs grown. He whole fambly wuz mos grown up. Hestuh she Shad's gran. Yuh knows Shad? Bentoo she duh younges. Magret she my gran."

We asked if Belali Mohomet had been related to Belali Sullivan on St. Simons.

"I ain know bout St. Simon but Cotto use tuh talk bout cousin Belali Sullivan.

"Yes'm, I membuh muh gran too. Belali he frum Africa but muh gran she come by Bahamas. She

speak funny wuds we didn know. She say 'mosojo' an sometime 'sojo' wen she mean pot. Fuh watuh she say 'deloe' an fuh fyuh she say 'diffy.' She tell us, 'Tak sojo off diffy.'

"Wen sumpm done she say, 'Bim-boga-rum.' Yuh tell uh sumpm wut is a subprise lak somebody die, den she say, 'Ma-foo-bey, ma-foo-bey.'

"She am tie uh head up lak I does, but she weah a loose wite clawt da she trow obuh uh head lak veil an it hang loose on uh shoulduh. I ain know wy she weah it dataway, but I tink she ain lak a tight ting roun uh head.

"She make funny flat cake she call 'saraka.' She make um same day ebry yeah, an it big day. Wen dey finish, she call us in, all duh chillun, an put in hans in flat cake an we eats it. Yes'm, I membuh how she make it. She wash rice, an po off all duh watuh. She let wet rice sit all night, an in mawnin rice is all swell. She tak dat rice an put it in wooden mawtuh, an beat it tuh paste wid wooden pestle. She add honey, sometime shuguh, an make it in flat cake wid uh hans. 'Saraka' she call un."



Source: Georgia Writers' Project, *Drums and Shadows*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1940, 152–155.

## African Muslim immigrants

Islamic religion was first practiced on the African continent in the seventh century and has steadily grown since that time. Brought by Arabic-speaking warriors, scholars, government officials, and traders to North Africa, it took hundreds of years for the religion to become the dominant tradition in countries such as Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco. By the Middle Ages, Islam began to be adopted by more and more sub-Saharan Africans in the western and eastern parts of the continent. First the religion of elites, traders, and rulers, Islam eventually spread to Africans from a great variety of ethnic and social groups. In some modern nations, such as Senegal and Somalia, it became the dominant religious tradition; in others, such as Nigeria, its growth rate roughly paralleled that of Christianity.

Thousands of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES were the first significant population of Muslims in the thirteen colonies and the United States. For almost four centuries, they represented the most influential group of Muslims in the Americas as a whole. A limited number of free Africans,

most likely sailors, may have also come to the colonies and the United States before the Civil War (1861–65), though the fear of enslavement kept most free black Africans away from the United States. After the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery was ratified in 1865, the immigration of free Africans began in earnest.

The first free African immigrants to arrive after the Civil War were often black Christians from West Africa and southern Africa who came seeking education or missionary training in both white and black Christian colleges and missionary institutions. One Muslim exception to this overwhelmingly Christian African immigration was DUSÉ MOHAMED ALI (1866–1945), a black Egyptian Muslim who toured the country in 1886 and in the early 1890s as a Shakespearean actor and returned in 1921 as a leading advocate of pan-Africanism, the movement to unite all people of African descent in a common struggle for political, economic, and cultural self-determination.

By the first decades of the 20th century, African Muslims began to appear in the United States more regularly, sometimes as sailors in the ports of NEW YORK CITY and New Orleans. In 1904, Sudanese Muslim missionary SATTI MAJID (1883–1963) probably disembarked in New Orleans, though little is known about his whereabouts and activities until 1921, when he became a Muslim religious leader to Yemeni sailors stranded in New York City during WORLD WAR I. Majid went on to establish Muslim religious groups in the cities of DETROIT, MICHIGAN, Pittsburgh, and New York in the 1920s, and even after departing the country in 1929, he remained in touch with his indigenous American followers through the 1930s from Egypt. After WORLD WAR II ended in 1945, African immigrants arrived in larger numbers, though many of them came to the United States as visitors, often as students seeking graduate education. At Hampton University in Virginia, for example, some African Muslim immigrants successfully petitioned the university for prayer space and converted some African-American students to Islam.

In total, from 1865 to 1965, approximately 57,000 persons arrived in the United States from sub-Saharan Africa, which includes West, East, and southern Africa. Assuming that a third of them were Muslim—reflecting the general ratio of Muslim to non-Muslim in sub-Saharan Africa—this would have meant that approximately 19,000 African Muslims arrived over this period of 100 years. Very little academic research has been conducted on free African immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa during this period, making it difficult to generalize about their lives in the United States. Much more is known about North African Muslims, who are part of the larger ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIM community.

The rise in the number of all African Muslim immigrants jumped dramatically after the passage of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965. From 1966 to 1980, 121,169 persons from

## 24 African Muslim immigrants

sub-Saharan Africa came to the United States, more than twice the number that had immigrated from 1865 to 1965. Tens of thousands of these people, perhaps as many as 41,000, were Muslims.

Like other immigrants from this era, they came seeking education, economic opportunity, and sometimes to escape the political turmoil or war in their home countries. By 1990, more than 364,000 Africans, including North Africans, had immigrated to the United States. By 2000, the number was 881,000. By 2004, the number of foreign-born Africans residing in the United States topped 1 million. One-third of them were from West Africa, while 26 percent of them were from East Africa. More than 100,000 were from Nigeria alone. One of every three foreign-born Africans was a naturalized citizen of the United States by 2004.

Though no reliable data established how many of these people were Muslim, it is likely that hundreds of thousands came from Muslim backgrounds. Whatever their precise number, sub-Saharan African Muslim immigrants were a visible minority in several U.S. cities, including New York City and Washington, D.C. In New York, they became entrepreneurs, often selling various products, including knock offs of expensive watches and handbags, through highly organized systems of street vending. They also drove cabs, braided hair, and opened restaurants, among other entrepreneurial activities. Around 116th and 117th Streets in Harlem, they established an area called Little Africa or *Le Petit Sénégal*.

African Muslim immigrants from Senegal also established religious communities that perpetuated and adapted their African Muslim traditions to the United States. In New York, they successfully lobbied in the 1990s for a Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Day, honoring the Senegalese saint and national hero credited with establishing the Murid Sufi order. On July 28 each year since then, hundreds of Senegalese, Gambian, and other West African Muslims march down Seventh Avenue in Harlem to Central Park, exclaiming in Arabic that “there is no god but God.”

By 2004, West African Muslims had established more than 20 mosques in New York City alone. These mosques often reflected the varieties of Islamic religion that could be found in West Africa. Masjid Aksa, which used rented space at the corner of Frederick Douglass Boulevard and 116th Street in Harlem, was led by a Sunni imam, or “religious leader,” from Ivory Coast who delivered sermons in Arabic, English, French, and Mande to a crowd from Gambia, Senegal, Guinea, Burkina, Mali, Sierra Leone, the Middle East, and the United States. Also Sunni in nature but focusing on a Sufi interpretation of Islam was the Tijani Sufi order in the Bronx, established in 1995 by followers of Senegalese Sufi teacher Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse (1900–75).

In CLEVELAND, OHIO, where African Muslim immigrants were smaller in number, many of them have integrated

with the long-standing Sunni African-American Muslim community. In the 1980s, religious teacher Masoud Laryea of Ghana was chosen to lead the prayers on Islamic HOLIDAYS, when many of Cleveland’s Muslims, from a variety of backgrounds, would come together to pray. Religious leader Ali Omar of Nigeria became imam of Masjid al-Haqq, the “Mosque of Truth,” in 1993 and then became principal of the school connected to the mosque. In 1997, he then became principal of the Cleveland Community Islamic School.

One of the results of African integration into existing Muslim institutions in Cleveland has been the proliferation of African religious influences in the practice of Islam among AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS. African-American Muslim religious leader Daud Abdul Malick, for example, became interested in the Tijani Sufi order after Senegalese Muslims began attending Masjid al-Haqq, which he led. By the 1990s, he had traveled to the Tijani center at Kaolack, Senegal; invited Tijani leader Hassan Cisse to lecture in Cleveland; and, in 1995, hired seven teachers from Africa to work at the ISLAMIC SCHOOL he ran. Similarly, Hussein Akram, the son of Sunni African-American Muslim pioneer WALI AKRAM (1904–94), became attracted to the Murid Sufi order in the 1990s and established a *zawiya*, or “Sufi circle,” devoted to its followings at the First Cleveland Mosque.

In addition to maintaining their ties to their African homelands and their traditions, many African Muslim immigrants in the late 20th century found that their religious views had changed as a result of living in the United States. In Washington, D.C., where 3,000 to 5,000 Sierra Leoneans had settled by the early 1990s, anthropologist JoAnn D’Alisera found that many Muslims came to criticize aspects of their Islamic upbringing in West Africa. Those who attended the multiethnic, multinational ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C., described what had happened to them in America as being “born again.” Careful study of religious books, increased prayer, and stricter adherence to Islamic religious norms resulted in a more meaningful religious life for many of D’Alisera’s informants. For a female hot dog vendor, this increased adherence to Islamic norms meant displaying bumper stickers on her food cart that featured verses of the QUR’AN in addition to a sign indicating that she sold only Sabrett Kosher Hot Dogs (Jewish kosher food is generally recognized by Muslims as *halal*, or “permissible”).

The struggles of other African Muslim immigrants in the late 20th and early 21st centuries to adjust to life in the United States was sometimes made more difficult by the fact that thousands of them were refugees. In 2001 alone, according to the Department of Homeland Security, more than 19,000 African refugees arrived in the United States, largely from Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, all of which suffered from political violence or civil war. By 2010, more than 150,000 Somali immigrants had

come to the United States. At least 25,000 of them settled in Minnesota. Since only an estimated 7 percent of them were fluent English speakers, their employment opportunities were limited, a situation that was made worse by the fact some employers banned the wearing of the hijab, or “headscarf,” at work.

Muslim-American SOCIAL WORKERS, non-Muslim government officials, and Somali community activists joined together to advocate for the immigrants, attempting to identify employers, landlords, and educators who would be sensitive to the cultural considerations of this vulnerable population. Organizations such as the Confederation of Somali Communities, founded in 1994, and the Somali Community Association of Ohio, founded in 1996, joined in the cause, resulting in the successful identification of friendly employers and the adjudication of various disputes with landlords.

Many observers of African Muslim immigrant cultures noted at the beginning of the 21st century how various groups of African Muslims—from Sierra Leonean cab drivers in Washington to Senegalese street vendors in New York—were visible signs of immigrant success but were invisible as Muslim practitioners. After the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, the public face of Islam in mainstream American media was often that of Asian Muslims, whether from the Middle East or South Asia. This image of Islamic identity as essentially “brown” and Asian effectively obscured the multiracial nature of American Islam, especially its black roots. From the colonial era to the present, Muslims of African descent had always been present in the thirteen colonies and the United States. From the perspective of the past, there was no more representative face of Islam in America.

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### Aga Khan (1936– ) leader of Isma‘ili Muslim Americans

Aga Khan is an honorific title of Persian-Turkic origins meaning “lord and chief” bestowed initially in the 1820s by the Iranian monarch on the contemporary spiritual leader, or “imam,” of the Nizari Isma‘ilis, a minority Shi‘a Muslim community. The Nizari Isma‘ilis, now scattered in 25 countries of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and North America, have always had an imam, or “supreme leader,” who is a lineal descendant of the prophet MUHAMMAD. This title has been borne on a hereditary basis in modern times by the Nizari Isma‘ili imams. In the early 21st century, the holder of the title is Prince Karim Aga Khan IV.

Sultan Muhammad Shah Aga Khan III (1877–1957), who had established residences in Europe, was succeeded as imam in 1957 by his grandson Prince Karim Aga Khan IV, son of Prince Aly Khan. Born in Geneva in 1936, the present imam of the Nizari Isma‘ilis, the 49th in the series, was educated in Switzerland and then at Harvard University. He has substantially expanded the community development initiatives of his grandfather Aga Khan III, who had acquired international prominence as a Muslim reformer and statesman.

Aga Khan IV has also developed many new programs for the socioeconomic and educational benefit of his followers as well as other populations of certain Asian and African countries. He created a complex institutional network known as the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) to promote a humanitarian, intellectual, and civilizational vision of Islam and to promote a tradition of service to a variety of social groups. The AKDN has disbursed around \$300 million annually on its nonprofit activities.

Many of Aga Khan IV's projects have been financed through the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), serving as an international development agency, with programs in four continents, including North America (Canada and the United States). In the United States, the AKF has worked with a number of developmental agencies as well as educational institutions, such as Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture has been established to educate architects and planners to cater to the needs of modern Muslim societies.

In 2008, through Aga Khan IV's efforts, a partnership was established between the Aga Khan University (AKU) and the University of Texas at Austin for enhancing the understanding of Americans about the historical and cultural aspects of Muslim societies through training secondary school teachers in the Texas school system in a curriculum on Muslim civilizations. Since the 1970s, Aga Khan IV has also aided thousands of his followers who emigrated from East Africa and South Asia to ATLANTA, GEORGIA; Houston, Texas; CHICAGO, ILLINOIS; and other major cities of the United States.

Farhad Daftary



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**agriculture**

Throughout American history, many different groups of Muslim Americans have been involved with agriculture. Muslim slaves and free blacks made important contributions to agriculture during the colonial period. At the start of the 20th century, Syrian ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS came as agricultural laborers and homesteaders to NORTH DAKOTA and other parts of the Midwest. Influenced by the experience of the GREAT DEPRESSION, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS attempted to create an intentional agricultural community in the 1940s. In the 1950s, Yemeni Muslims came to work as agricultural laborers in California, and some stayed permanently. The NATION OF ISLAM developed a system of farms to provide food and raw materials for black people in America. More recently, Muslims in Mississippi and Pennsylvania have built communities around farms. Together, these groups represent a diversity of history, ideas, and practices among Muslim Americans and farmers.

### IMPORTED PEOPLE, KNOWLEDGE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Throughout the colonial era, the success of American agriculture depended on African knowledge and labor, and colonists often specifically requested slaves from areas in Africa with large Muslim populations. In the Americas, colonists began growing Asian and African crops, such as sugar, rice, indigo, and cotton, that were sought but not grown by Europeans. Colonists also often depended on African expertise in raising and handling horses and cattle. Colonists requested Muslim horsemen, who were forcibly taken from Senegambia, because African Muslims had been buying horses from Arab merchants and had developed impressive cavalries for centuries. Some slaves used their familiarity and skills with horses to escape, and some runaways stole horses and used them to harass plantations.

In South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Louisiana, planters requested Senegambian and Sierra Leonean slaves because of their skills in rice and indigo cultivation. The French in New Orleans also preferred Senegambians because of their Muslim values and practices. They thought that Senegambians' belief in one God and the importance of literacy and sense of modesty and decency made them better plantation managers than non-Muslims. Senegambians may have accounted for as much as 21 percent of the total slave trade in North America.

Although sought for their agricultural knowledge, many Muslim slaves were not farmers before they came to America. A few had been herders, rice planters, and blacksmiths, but many were teachers, students, religious leaders, military officers, traders, and even nobility.

Many Muslims rose to important positions on the plantations or gained their freedom. Some became slave drivers, a position that they may have held in Africa, and some became plantation managers. In Jamaica, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (1789–?) kept his owner's books in Arabic. Some freed slaves became landowners in the United States or eventually returned to Africa. Muslim slaves may have gained these positions because of skills acquired through their elite status in Africa. Their past may also have motivated them, because they may have been unaccustomed or unwilling to do agricultural labor. Finally, they possibly benefited from racist ideas about the superiority of Muslims, whom many whites considered to be “less African” and thus less inferior than non-Muslim black people.

Sometimes practicing agriculture could help Muslim slaves assert their autonomy. Enslaved peoples were often ordered to fish, hunt, and cultivate a small garden so plantation owners would not need to feed their slaves. This meant that slaves had to work on their day off, but it also gave Muslims the freedom to maintain their religious practices and cultural identity.

Because they were so central to the security and agricultural success of the Hudson Valley, slaves in New Netherland in the 17th century could marry and own land, livestock, and other property. Some who were granted half-freedom could even work for themselves. However, they could be reenslaved if they failed to pay the Dutch West India Company crops and livestock or to work for the company when needed. Anthony Jansen Van Salee (ca. 1607–76), who may have been Muslim, became one of the largest landowners on Manhattan prior to 1639 due to his prosperous farming.

Muslims from Spain also had an indirect effect on American agriculture, specifically irrigation practices, during the colonial period. Muslims had brought water laws and irrigation technologies to the Iberian Peninsula, and Spanish migrants to the American Southwest brought and implemented these practices and laws.

### IMMIGRANT FARMERS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY Syrian Sodbusters

Syrians from the Ottoman Empire (specifically the areas that would become Lebanon and Syria) started coming to America in the late 1800s. Like many in this era, they came seeking economic opportunity and because they no longer wanted to live under Ottoman rule. Some became “sodbusters,” joining other American homesteaders who helped clear the Great Plains and settle North Dakota by applying for a free 160-acre parcel of land from the federal government. So many Muslim Syrians

moved to North Dakota that they built their own mosque and Muslim cemetery in the late 1920s or early 1930s.

Mary Juma and her husband were among the first Syrians to homestead in western North Dakota in the first decade of the 20th century. They, like many other Syrians who settled in the area, came to the United States through Montreal, working as peddlers. Juma recalled that "In 1902, we came to western North Dakota where we started to peddle. It was at the time when there was such an influx of people to take homesteads, and for no reason at all, we decided to try homesteading too." Later Syrian immigrants settled in North Dakota because of established Syrian communities.

The Jumas migrated as a married couple, but some Syrian men came alone. Often, they worked as agricultural laborers rather than or before starting their own homesteads. These men also found work on section crews and in factories. Usually, the pay was much better in America. Prior to moving, Mike Abdallah, a Syrian immigrant who moved to North Dakota in 1907, had made 25 cents per day as an agricultural laborer. In North Dakota, he made \$25 to \$30 per month.

Most Syrian immigrants had been farmers in the Middle East, but farming in North Dakota was different because the climate was much harsher and farmers used horses and machinery. In the United States, Syrians raised cattle and chickens as well as crops. Although early farms were successful, some would continue to peddle when things were slow. These Syrian immigrants were interviewed by the Works Progress Administration's Federal Writers Program in the 1930s. By the time of these interviews, some had found the success of their farms had dwindled, and others had found that livestock was more successful than crops.

### Yemeni Laborers

For more than half a century, farms in the San Joaquin Valley of California have depended on native and immigrant labor, including Muslim Yemenis, who began working in the area in 1957. The first immigrants were young men from villages in central Yemen. Men immigrated because of turbulent political conditions at home and the increased chances of getting a job in the United States. They first immigrated to northeastern and midwestern cities. However, the pull of agricultural jobs and the example of early Yemenis led them to California.

Finding the Yemenis to be reliable and hard workers, growers sponsored their travels, and the population of Yemenis increased. By the mid-1970s, the population had decreased, as some left agricultural work for jobs in the automobile industry, permanently returned to Yemen, or went to work in Saudi Arabia, where it was cheaper and easier to obtain a visa.

In the early 1990s, the Yemeni population in the San Joaquin Valley started growing again as Yemenis brought

their families to America. Before, Yemeni men came to California temporarily and sent their wages back to their families in Yemen, although some settled in the United States when they married and started families with Hispanic and other women from the area.

Yemeni labor has been central to the success of family-owned and corporate farmers in the Central Valley, where they worked alongside Hispanic, Italian, Yugoslavian, Hindu, Sikh, and Persian immigrants. Table grapes have been the major crop, but Yemenis have also harvested plums, pears, apricots, cherries, melons, asparagus, and other fruits and vegetables. Agricultural work has been seasonal, so many have not had a steady paycheck or place of employment, although veteran foremen have earned annual salaries. Workers have usually prepared vineyards in the spring and harvested grapes in the summer and fall. In the winter, many have traveled south to look for work.

Until the late 1970s or early 1980s, before the number of Yemeni workers declined, individual and communal prayers would take place at labor camps, where many workers lived. Those camps that housed only Yemenis would often have a makeshift mosque. By the early 21st century, most prayed at home and scheduled their prayers around their work on the farms.

### THE NATION OF ISLAM

As part of the Nation of Islam's Three Year Economic Program, which was established in 1964 to address the needs of poor black city dwellers, Nation of Islam (NOI) leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD called for the creation of a system of farms that would provide economic self-sufficiency as well as ritual purity and food security to all members of the NOI. He had his followers at Detroit's Temple No. 1 purchase cattle and a 140-acre farm in White Cloud, Michigan. By 1975, when Muhammad died, the NOI owned 1,000 acres in Michigan, 9,000 acres in Alabama, and 5,000 acres in Georgia. However, after Muhammad's death, the land was sold to help pay back taxes. Although the NOI had to sell all its land, these farms and the historical circumstances that led to their development have provided some of the stimulus for the development of late 20th- and early 21st-century Muslim farms among members of the NOI and Sunni Muslims.

In December 1994, NOI leader LOUIS FARRAKHAN purchased 1,500 acres of land in Bronwood, Georgia, to restart the NOI's farm program. The farm has been trying a variety of crops, and 20 acres have been set aside for organic produce. The farm has marketed and sold its produce through buying clubs associated with NOI temples in Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, Ohio, California, Louisiana, Alabama, New Jersey, Arizona, Mississippi, and Washington, D.C.

To coordinate its agricultural enterprises, the NOI established a Ministry of Agriculture composed of a minister

of agriculture and four departments: Administration and Finance, Agricultural Production, Farm Marketing, and Agricultural Education. In the early 21st century, the minister of agriculture was the caretaker of the farm in Bronwood, Georgia, but most of the remaining labor has come from volunteers and interns. The minister has stated that the farm would be more productive if 10 families lived and worked there, but as of 2008, the farm did not have stable enough markets to employ so many people. The NOI has sought to expand available markets and has considered increasing its production of organic food. This type of produce, however, is more labor intensive. Attempts to make the farm economically viable have been ongoing. The ultimate goal of this agricultural program is to provide one meal per day and the raw materials for the production of clothing and housing to every black person in America. To meet this goal, the NOI has helped other black farm owners, whether Muslim or not.

### INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES

#### **Jabul Arabiyya**

Incorporated in 1938 and established in 1941, the Jabul Arabiyya Muslim community, governed by shari'a was the first attempt by Muslim Americans to create an intentional religious and agricultural community. Situated in Cattaraugus County, south of Buffalo, New York, and inhabited until at least 1992, it was created so that African-American Sunni Muslims could provide for themselves economically and practice their religious beliefs. In 1946, the community owned 331 acres and had 40 residents. Each resident was entitled to build on the land and got a portion for farming and gardening, but the title to the land was retained by the community. Each member had to return 10 percent of his or her profit to the group for religious and educational purposes. Most of the residents worked in factories in the Buffalo area, but many also received welfare from the U.S. government.

The community had hoped to be self-sufficient, but it was plagued by the difficulty of finding new members, economic troubles, and the lack of member involvement in the greater community. There were several Muslim and non-Muslim groups that showed interest in investing in the Jabul Arabiyya, such as a group of Muslim immigrants who wanted to use the community's autonomy to bring immigrants into the country from Canada and another group who wanted to construct a halfway house for recent parolees. However, these groups were turned down because the community was intended to be a place free of crime and where African-American Muslims were the majority.

#### **New Medinah**

Just east of the Pearl River in Marion County, Mississippi, New Medinah is a place where the residents' desire to live their Islamic beliefs has coincided with their craving for a

more rural existence. Sunni Muslims originally bought this land in 1983 to use as a Muslim retreat center, and they grew watermelons and corn to pay the mortgage. In 1985, some of the purchasers suggested that the area be used as an Islamic residential community. They wanted a place where they could live and work in a rural area, strive for economic independence, and practice their religious beliefs. By naming this rural enclave New Medinah, or "New City," the founders showed their intention to form a community that would inspire others in Mississippi and the United States to live in harmony with Islamic ideals.

Covering 64 acres, the community was designed to have minimal impact on the environment, and at the beginning of the 21st century, 10 families lived in a centralized area surrounding the CLARA MUHAMMAD School, which was the only Islamic school in the state of Mississippi. At this school, which was part of a system of schools started by the NOI and then changed under the direction of W. D. MOHAMMED, students could study the Arabic language, Islamic history, writing, mathematics, and other subjects. This arrangement left plenty of open space for gardens, pastures, and woodlots, and there was a large farm and pasture area. Most of the community members were originally from urban areas and had little or no agricultural experience.

These Muslims have tried many different types of agriculture. Some cultivated organic fruits and vegetables or practiced halal agriculture, whereby chickens and cattle are raised in accordance with Islamic principles. Other members have tried to sell cut flowers and vegetables, but pastured poultry has been the cornerstone of the community's agricultural enterprise. Most residents still commuted to nearby cities to work or have been self-employed outside of farming. The community became involved with poultry through programs sponsored by Heifer International and SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education), and they have used their involvement in agriculture to reach out to other Muslims and farmers.

#### **Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship Farm**

Headquartered in Philadelphia, the BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN FELLOWSHIP is a predominantly white community of Sufi Muslims. As of 2008, this community owned land west of Philadelphia in Unionville, Pennsylvania, that functioned as a farm, an Islamic cemetery, and the burial site of Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, their spiritual leader who died in 1986. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen asked the community to purchase this land in the 1980s not only for a cemetery but also so they could learn from the experience of farming, which he believed taught lessons about cooperation, unity, and taking care of the needy.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, many members moved to the area around the farm, and they have started their own

branch of the fellowship. They started out gardening and growing vegetables, then rented out some of the land to a local farmer and participated in CSA (community-supported agriculture), which is a system introduced to the United States from Europe in the 1980s, whereby community members invest in the farm and receive shares of the farm's products. In 2000, the fellowship enrolled the farm in a government-sponsored environmental program in which the land lays fallow for 10 years and the community plants native grasses and trees. The fellowship elected to plant all fruit trees. This program is set to expire in 2010, and the community has planned to start organic farming using native plants and to build a "green village" with minimal environmental impact and environmentally sound building materials for retired fellowship members.

### CONCLUSION

Muslims have made important contributions to American history through their involvement in agriculture, and agriculture has influenced the experiences of many Muslims in America. It was often the reason that foreign Muslims came to North America or migrated to specific places within the United States. Agriculture has often been a point of encounter between Muslims and other Americans or a focal point for Muslims to organize their own communities. It helped shape Muslim-American life and identity.

Eleanor Finnegan

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### WPA Interview with Mike Abdallah (1939)

*Though many Arab-American Muslims made their living in the first half of the 20th century by peddling or working in factories, at least some earned their money by farming, the trade that they had been taught as youths in Syria or Lebanon. In a 1939 Works Progress Administration interview with fieldworker Everal McKinnon, North Dakota farmer Mike Abdallah discussed the differences between his life as a farmer in the "Old Country" of Mt. Lebanon and his life as a farmer on the Dakota plains. One of a number of Muslim homesteaders in the town of Ross, North Dakota, Abdallah was caught up in the disastrous Great Depression of the 1930s, when the low price of grain put many farmers out of business. He bemoaned the price of cattle that he sold to the government but also said that his family's standard of living was largely unaffected by the economic collapse.*



I was born in Rufage, Rushia, Syria. I don't remember the date, nor the month but I believe that it was in 1886. (People in the Old Country did not keep track of their age or birth date because of the Turkish rule and they forced our boys into military service when they were of a certain age.) The village that I was born in had a population of about four hundred people. The land on the east of the village was level farm land and on the west at a



short distance was mountains. My home was a one story six room stone building, about thirty by forty. The floor was made like all the other homes in the Old Country, poles about six inches in diameter were laid side by side on the ground. Then we mixed clay with water till it made a very thick mud, this was packed in between the poles and on top of the poles with a very heavy roller, then lime that we found was spread on the top of the clay while the clay was still wet and then the heavy roller was used some more until the lime was worked into the clay. When this became dry it would harden like cement. The floors for the second story of a two story house we made the same way.

I went to school one year. It wasn't a school like in this country. Father paid a man, living in our town to write and read our Bible [Qur'an]. That was my education.

Father was a farmer and until I was a full grown man, I worked at home for father. When I was old enough to work out for others, I received about twenty-five cents a day.

Taxes in the Old Country was much different from here. Taxes there were figured according to what your crop produced. For instance, for every ten bushels that the farmer got from the crop, the government took one bushel.

For seven years, I farmed for myself in the Old Country. I farmed about forty acres, with a team of oxen, wooden plow equipped with an iron lay, the rest of the farm work such as seeding, reaping and threshing, I had to do by hand. I had one cow and about a dozen chickens, but no goats or sheep as most people had.

We had church services every Friday. I belonged to the Moslem church in the Old Country the same as I do in this country. We didn't have anything like confirmation. . . .

In the old country I only had forty acres to farm and only one cow so it was very hard to make a living. A man couldn't make a living by working out. Quite a few people from our town had already come to America and their letters told of lots of work for which they got big pay, free land to farm and live on, and much freedom. We didn't have any freedom in the Old Country as we were under the Turkish rule and we even had to be very careful what we said and the taxes we paid were taken by Turkey and we never got anything back for the taxes we paid. Our roads were terrible. Then the Turkish government made our men and boys serve in their army for sometimes many years.

When I left for America, I gave my land and things to my mother and sister, my father was dead. I borrowed seventy-five dollars besides the money I had saved, to make the trip. I brought only some clothes and enough food to last until I got to France. There were fifteen of us that left from our town at that time. H.A. Juma and Alley Farhart were in the group. I don't remember the names of the rest. We left from Beirut the spring of 1907 and sailed to Naples, Italy, on a cattle boat, from there we traveled through France by train and took a boat to Liverpool, England. I can't remember sailing from England to Montreal, Canada. It seems to me that I was only on a boat two times on the whole trip. (Field Worker's Note: Mrs. Abdallah tried to convince the informant that he must have crossed the ocean on a boat, but he could not recall it.)

I stayed in Montreal for one month and then came to Fargo, N.D., by train. I tried to peddle for about three months but I couldn't make a living at that, so I took the train to Ashley, N.D. There were other Syrians already there and I went to work on a farm; worked on farms there for three years, making from twenty-five to thirty dollars a month. In 1911, I came to Ross. I worked out for four years and during threshing I got \$1.25 a day. When working by the month I got \$30. In 1915, I filed on a homestead sec. 12-157-92. I lived on my homestead for two years and then lived with Frank Osman for a year. I got my Naturalization papers Oct. 2, 1916. In 1918, I moved to New Rockford, N.D. I stayed in New Rockford for five months and worked in the section crew. In 1919, I moved to Detroit, Michigan, and worked in the factories for two and a half years. In 1921, I moved back to Ross, N.D., as I got married in 1920 and had to settle down and make a home. I have lived around Ross ever since. I rented three farms and in 1927, I bought the farm we are now living on.

When I first came to America, I thought America was pretty funny. The way people done things seemed funny. The people were always in a hurry and when they got done there didn't seem to be any reason for the hurry. When they went someplace they were in a hurry; everything in the Old Country was much slower and people weren't in a hurry. I didn't like it for the first two years I was in America and many times I felt like I wanted to go back to the Old Country.

I couldn't talk or understand the American language when I came here and when I was peddling

I had to talk to people by motions and when I wanted to tell anyone the price of a thing, I would take money from my pocket and show them the amount of the price. When I wanted to ask for a place to sleep, I had to lay down on the floor and play that I was asleep and then they knew what I wanted. Nearly everyone felt sorry for me because I couldn't talk their language. I remember one time when a bunch of people wanted to know what nationality I was so a man asked me if I was Jewish, and I nodded my head no. So he asked me if I was a sheeny [an archaic epithet for Jews]. It sounded enough like "Syrian" so I nodded my head meaning yes. Everyone laughed very hard. It took me about two years to learn enough English to get along good.

I was attracted to my first American residence by other Syrians living in that community and an opportunity to make a living. That was at Ashley, N.D. Hassyn Murray and Frank Osman live there in a Russian settlement. I guess my real first residence was on my homestead at Ross, N.D., as before that I only worked for others. I lived there to prove up my homestead. The Syrians living at Ashley came from the Old Country.

When I first started farming in this country I had a plow, harrow, and binder. I farmed 100 acres when I started and in 1924 I farmed 240 acres. Now I farm 160 acres. My best crop was in 1925, I had a real good crop that year. I believe, in fact my steadiest income has been from cattle and sheep. Until 1934 we depended mostly on the cattle, since it was so dry we have depended more on the sheep. I have 106 head of sheep, 9 cows, and 7 horses. I have more machinery now and do all my farming with horse. In 1934 I was forced to sell 39 head of cattle to the government because I didn't have feed for them.

I have not been able to make anything farming since 1929. I belong to the Agricultural Conservation Association. If it weren't for this there wouldn't be any money in trying to raise a crop. I don't think we live any different now than we did before there was a depression. If we can't eat good there wouldn't be any use living. It was hard to have to sell my cattle to the government for so little money but they would have starved if had tried to keep them. I think the depression was because of the war.

My wife was born in Rufage, Rushia, Syria. We don't know the date of her birth but it was in the year 1886. (Field Worker's Note: Mrs. Abdallah

told as a joke: there are several of the Syrians here that don't know their age, and they never get to be over 55 or 60 years old. I guess I am like the rest of them. Because of military reasons nobody in the old country kept track of their age and they still don't know I am sure that some of them can't tell within 15 or 20 years of their correct age.) Mrs. Abdallah was married and had two children in the old country before coming to America. One of these was a girl and she remained in the old country and is married, the other also a girl born in 1910 in Rufage, Rushia, Syria. Her name is Nozema, now married. Sarah [was] born at Medina, N.D., born in 1914 (date of birth can be found in write-up on Allay Omar, as she is now Mrs. Omar.) She completed the eighth grade in Ross Public School. Alley born July 4, 1915, at New Rockford, N.D. completed 6th grade. . . .

[We don't have much recreation] besides going to town, listening to the radio, the children try to play the mouth organ and the guitar. Sometimes we go to the neighbors to visit but most times we have work enough to keep us busy. The boys do a lot of trapping and hunting here in these hill and they like the sport of it and the cash they get out of it. My wife does a lot of sewing and the girls also do some of this. . . .

I suppose that the Old Country has changed a lot since I left there but at that time the work was very hard, as everything had to be done by hand, while in this country the work was really very easy as most of it was done by machinery even at that time. In the Old Country the climate is much better than here and it seemed to make old people feel young. You could work hard all day and go to bed real tired and when you wake up in the morning you feel as if you had never worked, while here a night's sleep doesn't make you feel that good. It sometimes snows a foot or more over there but still the people go bare-footed and the water under the snow feels as warm as though it had been warmed on the stove for about fifteen minutes. The water on the top of the ground is always too warm to drink and be good. I think that is the only way that the old country is better. In this country we get improvements for our tax money and we can think and say what we think while in the Old Country we could think what we wanted but we didn't dare say it.

In the Old Country we planted our winter wheat in August and planted our spring crop in April. Our harvest came in June.

If I had my life to live over again, I'd likely do about the same things only I'd come to America when I was younger and I settle down and stay there. I'd maybe settle in the state of Michigan or in No. Dak. I would get married younger and try to save for my old age. I wouldn't try to raise much crop if I was on a farm; I'd go into cattle and sheep. I can't really say that I am sorry that I lived the way I have because I have always enjoyed life.



Source: Works Progress Administration North Dakota Writers' Project Ethnic Group Files, Series 30559, Roll 3, 1939.

### Ahmadi Muslim Americans

The Ahmadi sect in Islam, also known as the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam or the Ahmadi Muslim Community, originated in the late 19th century in what is now Pakistan. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (ca. 1839–1908), a controversial and prolific Muslim writer and thinker, founded the Ahmadiyya in 1889. While Ahmadis, members of the Ahmadiyya, consider themselves to be part of orthodox Sunni Islam, many Muslims have rejected them because of specific claims of the movement's founder. In spite of persecution in Pakistan and elsewhere, the Ahmadis have been remarkably successful in spreading their movement around the world through highly organized missionary activity.

Through their proselytizing, Ahmadi missionaries in the United States have had a great impact on the formation of African-American Muslim identity. Their American mission was immensely successful for its first few decades, especially from the 1920s through the 1950s, although its influence waned in the second half of the 20th century. In the final decades of the 20th century and into the present, the Ahmadiyya has faced renewed marginalization as increasing numbers of American Muslims turn to what they view as more orthodox Sunni Islam.

#### ORIGINS OF THE MOVEMENT

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born ca. 1839 in Qadian in what is now Pakistan but was then the Punjab region of British India. He began his career as a spiritual leader through a voluminous body of written work, including perhaps his most important book, *Barahin-i Ahmadiyya* (Proofs of the Ahmadiyya), published in five volumes beginning in 1880. In this and other books, Ghulam Ahmad attempted to defend both Islam as a whole against attacks by Christian missionaries in India and Hindu revivalist movements, such as the Arya Samaj, as well as articulate his own interpretations of the Islamic tradition.

The official beginnings of his movement date from 1889, when Ghulam Ahmad claimed to receive revelations from God for the first time. This year also marks the first time he formally received disciples. Over the course of many years, from 1880 until his death in 1908, Ghulam Ahmad put forth several claims: First, he claimed to be a *mujaddid*, a “renewer,” of the faith sent by God, according to tradition, during each century of the Islamic calendar. Second, he claimed to fulfill Jesus Christ's appointed role as *masih*, or “messiah,” though he did not claim to be Jesus in a strict sense. Third, he cast himself as an avatar of the Hindu deity Krishna. Fourth, he argued for the suspension of jihad by violent means, opting instead to defend Islam through his writing and public debates.

Finally, he believed himself to be a Muslim prophet, though he asserted emphatically that his prophetic mission in no way superseded the prophet Muhammad's or brought a new revelation to replace Islam. Rather, he intended to consummate the message that Muhammad brought in the QUR'AN. His goal was to propagate Islam as such, not another religion of his own design. Above all, he claimed to thrive within the prophetic light of Muhammad, “receiving light from his light.” His opponents have rejected this claim, insisting that it violates the orthodox Sunni belief in Muhammad as the “seal of the Prophets.” Although many Sunni Muslims do not consider followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be Muslims, the Ahmadis themselves believe they are orthodox Muslims and that Ahmad himself was one of a series of important figures after the prophet Muhammad whose missions were to revive and spread Islam. The controversy over the Islamic identity of the Ahmadis has turned violent in several countries, such as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, where they face systematic discrimination.

#### THE AHMADIYYA IN AMERICA: 1920–1965

Ahmadi missionaries came to the United States in the early 20th century, seeing America as a potentially rich field for converts to Islam. Significantly, they faced the challenge of adapting their immensely complex theology so that their message could appeal to an audience that knew little about Islam in general, much less about nuances of Islamic doctrine. They occasionally encountered hostile reactions to their missions. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, the first Ahmadi missionary to the United States, was arrested upon his arrival in Philadelphia on February 15, 1920. Immigration authorities detained him immediately on the charge of being “a representative of a religion that practiced polygamy.” Mormons in the United States had practiced polygamy openly after 1852, and anti-Mormon campaigns of the late 19th century set the tone for suspicion toward any immigrants associated, justly or not, with this practice. An immigration statute of 1891 banned the admission of anyone who practiced polygamy due to its “moral turpitude.”

After a series of appeals, Sadiq was finally allowed to enter the country in April. Immediately, he began writing



editorials for major newspapers and giving public lectures on Islam to a highly curious, if skeptical, American public. In October 1920, Sadiq established the headquarters of his mission in CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, which also became the location of the Ahmadi's first mosque in the United States. In July 1921, with the help of some Muslim Americans, Mufti Muhammad Sadiq established a monthly periodical, the *Muslim Sunrise*, primarily to challenge misrepresentations of Islam in the American press. The first English-language Muslim magazine in the United States, the journal also served as a medium for spreading the Ahmadi message among non-Muslims, with articles about the basics of Islamic faith and ritual.

A typical issue of *Muslim Sunrise* included short articles on basics of Islamic faith; excerpts from the Qur'an and hadith, the reports of sayings and deeds of the prophet Muhammad and his companions, both in Arabic and in English transliteration; didactic articles on when and how to pray; and stories and vignettes from the life of Ahmad. The magazine also featured testimonials from Ahmadi converts, defenses of Islam against Western polemics, and articles covering topics ranging from Islam and the consumption of alcohol to Islamic art. In virtually all respects, the intended audience of the magazine was non-Muslims in the West. The cover of the magazine carried the image of a sun rising over North America. Muhammad Sadiq used the journal as a forum for criticizing racial prejudice against African Americans and emphasized that Islam was, at least in principle, an egalitarian faith set apart from the racist heritage of mainstream Protestant Christianity in the United States.

Ahmadi missionaries after him amplified this criticism by pointing to the widespread segregation of Protestant Christian churches at the time and, in contrast, presented Islam as an egalitarian, multiracial faith. Ahmadi missionaries carefully crafted their outreach to African Americans by aligning themselves with broader currents of African-American liberation ideologies. In the decades of the early and mid-20th century, the Ahmadiyya competed for attention with the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE and the NATION OF ISLAM, though these groups ultimately won greater numbers of African-American converts. Yet all three groups derived their messages at least partly from and contributed to a broader notion of pan-African identity and black self-empowerment. It is telling that ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, the founder of the Nation of Islam, used an Ahmadi translation of the Qur'an. There is a plausible link between Ahmadi influence on the early Nation of Islam and its own doctrine of continuous prophecy in the figure of W. D. FARD, whom Elijah Muhammad considered to be a divine messenger sent by God.

The Ahmadiyya movement sent a series of missionaries to follow up on the foundations that Muhammad Sadiq established in the United States. In 1928, Mutiur Rahman Bengalee, for example, was officially appointed by the

Ahmadi missionary center in British India, in what is now Pakistan. By 1933, Bengalee, accompanied by a host of other missionaries, including Khalid Nasir and Ghulam Yasin, developed Ahmadi communities in Chicago, NEW YORK CITY, and DETROIT, MICHIGAN, and established new communities in Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Kansas City, Missouri. Bengalee and others continued the work of promoting Islam as a race-blind religion. From 1921 to 1925, according to the *Muslim Sunrise*, there were 1,025 converts to the Ahmadi movement, mostly African-American residents of Detroit and Chicago. Several of these new converts took the Ahmadi message elsewhere, in particular setting up a major missionary office in St. Louis, Missouri.

Bengalee brought greater attention to the movement through multiple high-profile public lectures. This strategy for spreading the Ahmadi message culminated in several lectures at the World Fellowship of Faiths Convention held in Chicago in 1932. By 1950, the headquarters of the American mission of the Ahmadiyya had moved to WASHINGTON, D.C., but in 1955, African-American converts in Dayton, Ohio, built the first Ahmadi mosque constructed solely by African Americans, demonstrating their strength and commitment to Islam. Interestingly, in the 1950s and 1960s, the Ahmadiyya movement became especially influential among notable black jazz musicians by way of those who converted to Ahmadi Islam directly, such as Yusef Lateef and Ahmad Jamal, and those who associated with them.

Converts to the Ahmadi form of Islam underwent many of the same changes that any convert to Islam would typically undergo: They adopted Muslim names, changed their styles of dress, and altered what they ate. The converts practiced the same prayer rituals that they would encounter in any Sunni Muslim mosque. Despite their divergence from mainstream Sunni belief in some key ways, Ahmadi and the worldwide Sunni community share most aspects of Islam in common, from the five daily prayers to fasting during Ramadan. In recent times, however, Saudi Arabian authorities have banned them from going on the hajj.

#### THE AHMADIYYA IN AMERICA: 1965–PRESENT

The history of Ahmadi Muslim Americans has been influenced strongly by developments overseas. In 1947, after the partitioning of the British Indian Empire into Pakistan, India, and what is now Bangladesh, the Ahmadi's faced renewed persecution in their homeland. Pakistani religious scholars called for the government to officially condemn the Ahmadi's and eventually succeeded, as the Pakistani constitution effectively criminalized the Ahmadiyya by 1984, although the Ahmadi's faced widespread hostility long before then.

Ahmadi's in the United States have not been insulated from the aftershocks of this growing antagonism toward the movement. During the middle of the 20th century, Muslim

Americans who claimed the mantle of Islamic orthodoxy strongly criticized Ahmadi Muslims as heretics or misguided. After their initial success in converting African Americans to Islam, the movement had to contend with ideological competition on several fronts, including the Sunni Islam of immigrant Muslims and the gradual defection of African Americans from the movement to groups that defined themselves as orthodox. Like many communities that self-consciously identified themselves as Sunni or orthodox Muslims, many Muslim-American critics of the Ahmadi movement endeavored to align themselves with an objectified concept of global Islam. Muslims in the United States looked abroad in developing their sense of Muslim identity to fashion themselves in ways they believed were orthodox.

The IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 had a major impact on the contours of Islam in the United States. While Muslims of diverse backgrounds certainly lived in the United States before the 1960s, the 1965 law eliminated certain immigration quotas and facilitated a large influx of new immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries. Many of these new Americans brought their anti-Ahmadi sentiments with them. In addition, the rising influence of certain transnational Muslim organizations, such as the Muslim World League and the Islamic Circle of North America, came to adopt starkly anti-Ahmadi positions. These developments put the Ahmadiyya movement in the United States in a defensive position.

Many African-American Muslims began to regard themselves as “mainstream” Sunni Muslims and reject the sectarian basis of their black Muslim identity, whether from the Ahmadiyya movement or the Nation of Islam. The life of W. D. MOHAMMED encapsulates this gradual turn to an Islam that many blacks regarded as more orthodox. A son of Elijah Muhammad, W. D. Mohammed transformed the Nation of Islam after he took control in 1975, eventually renaming the organization the WORLD COMMUNITY OF AL-ISLAM IN THE WEST. Black Muslims associated with W. D. Mohammed’s organization were but some of the African-American Muslims who claimed a Sunni, or “orthodox,” identity. By the 1970s and 1980s, the Ahmadi Muslims accounted for a much smaller number of the total African-American Muslim population.

Still, Ahmadi Muslims have been and still are very active in *da’wa*, or Islamic “missionary activity.” They continue to translate and publish copies of the Qur’an throughout the world. Despite a decreased number of members from the African-American community, the Ahmadiyya movement remains an important presence among American Muslims, due especially to the arrival of Ahmadi immigrants from abroad. By 2008, there were approximately 60 Ahmadi mosques and community centers in the United States. Members of the Ahmadi community come together annually for a *jalsa*, a nationwide “gathering,” to meet each other, worship together, and discuss ways to strengthen and spread their faith. The Ahmadi Muslim community in the United States survives

and in some ways thrives in a society that is often unreceptive at best while also defending their unique interpretation of Islam among their coreligionists.

Brannon Ingram

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### Muhammad Sadiq’s Missionary Work (1921–1923)

Ahmadi Muslim missionary Muhammad Sadiq regularly reported on his missionary activities in *Muslim Sunrise*, the newspaper of Ahmadi Muslim Americans. Excerpts from those reports show the changing nature of his missionary work. Sadiq’s first challenge as a missionary was to gain entry to the United States. In 1920, federal officials in Philadelphia detained Sadiq on the suspicion that he was a polygamist, which was against U.S. law. Sadiq made the most of his detention, trying to convert fellow detainees to Islam. After successfully convincing officials that he was no polygamist and that he would not advocate polygamy, Sadiq gained admission to the country and began his mission in earnest. He lectured about Islam in various cities, established a headquarters in Chicago in 1920, and distributed religious literature to the masses. By 1923, it became clear to Sadiq that his mission was most warmly received by African Americans, and he focused more and more on efforts to bring black people to Islam. Sadiq promoted Islam as a religion that offered equality to all and as a social force that advanced black political interests. He also attempted to link his movement to Marcus Garvey’s popular Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), a pan-Africanist movement of the 1920s that advocated black capitalism, political independence, racial pride, and emigration to Africa. Quoting the UNIA’s official slogan of “One God, One Aim, One Destiny,” the *Muslim Sunrise* promised African Americans that if they converted to Islam, they would also be linked by Arabic, the sacred language of the Qur’an.



### One Year’s Moslem Missionary Work in America (1921)

It being the very first attempt to approach the Americans with the mission of Islam, I had to pass through all the difficulties that always con-

front a beginner of a work. I had no precedent before me to guide me and, therefore, much of my time has been spent in making experiences as regards the selection for my headquarters and the ways of approaching Americans. I cannot claim to have done any great work, but I do hope, in the grace of Allah, that in clearing the way for the future missionaries of Islam I have done some pioneer work and sown the seed of Truth throughout the land which will grow up in time and show in big, tall, strong trees to feed and shelter thousands, and send out healthy vibrations to millions.

The first difficulty I had to encounter was with the Immigration officers, who ordered me to return on the same steamer on which I had come, merely because I was a missionary of the Moslem faith, and on my refusal to return and asking permission to appeal to higher authorities in Washington I was placed in a detention house for about seven weeks. Those were the days of great trial, but I count them as the days of blessings, because I found the opportunity of offering prayers to God and meditation and planning the scheme for future work. Moreover, I began my work of preaching quietly among others detained like myself. The first of those who agreed with me there and joined our faith was Brother Hamid (Mr. R.J. Rochford), who was not allowed to land and was sent back with others. This good brother is now in England and keeps in touch with me by correspondence. He is my first convert to Islam after landing here. He is figuring to come over to Canada, and as he is zealous, I hope he will do great work in time to bring others to the blessed fold of Islam.

\* \* \*

#### **Brief Report of the Work in America (1921)**

A learned Christian lady after reading the first number of "Moslem Sunrise" writes to me from Iowa: "It is so instructive and gives a person an insight into things which no matter how prejudiced they may be, can not but help to make them believe the facts produced by Divine power. But my dear Mufti, such is the way of the world, it is hard to convince us or to replace an image once deeply implanted in our bosom." How truly is reflected in these words the intensity of the hard task before a worker in faith. There is a proverb in India, "It is very difficult

to drive away a literate demon." People like to remain stuck to their traditional thought and usages and have no mind to shake them off even if they find them wrong. This is the reason that the prophets and reformers are always abused by those very people for whom they are sincerely ready even to sacrifice their very lives. I am trying my best according to the means in my hands to convince the people of the truth of Islam but it will take some time to gain the desires of our hearts. Living being very high in this country it requires a big sum of money to start and continue all sorts of work to reach the people and give them our message. Hasbo-n-Allah wa-na-tawakkal aleihe—God is enough for us and in Him we put our trust.

Brother Mubarik and Sister Berket (Mr. and Mrs. Alberto), although new members themselves, have been zealous in spreading the truth and have secured two new converts in Florida.

Sheikh Abdullah Din Muhammad (Mr. J.L. Mott) is planning to build an Ahmadiya Moslem Mosque in New Orleans. Some of his American friends have promised considerable help and he himself intends to put \$500 into the funds out of his own pocket. May Allah assist him to accomplish this wonderful task.

Brother James Sodick—our young Russian Tartar Ahmadi—is curing a magnificent Ahmadi Moslem House in Chicago, Insha Allah [God willing].

In addition to the usual work at the centre I made a short tour through Toledo, Fort Wayne, Bremen, Chicago, and back via M.C. railroad, delivering lectures and giving interviews to the Press and the public. Thus I have made some new friends who have become interested in Islam and are studying your literature.

The correspondence work is growing very heavy. Mr. M. Yusuf Khan, the young Indian Ahmadi, has been helping me. The communications received for the quarter ending July, 1921, were 646 and those dispatched 2800, including that of the magazine. About 300 little leaflets and books also have been distributed.

Madame Rahatullah has been busy in New York making people interested in Islam and has already secured one American convert to Islam and one Moslem to the Ahmadiya Order. Her enthusiastic little article on Islam appears in this magazine on page 39. Madame will start lecturing in New York assisted by Mrs. Emerson (Allahdin) of Oriental Shop there.

The Brethren in Chicago hold regular meetings every Sunday with Mr. L. Roman as their Secretary.

Brothers Muhammad Yaqoob (Mr. Andrew Jacob) and Ghulam Rasul (R. Elias Russell) have been working like missionaries in Chicago and have succeeded in bringing nine American souls to the fold of Islam.

\* \* \*

**Crescent or Cross? A Negro May Aspire to Any Position under Islam without Discrimination (1923)**

The Teaching of the Prophet Is Being Profitably Imbided—With Millions of Moslems the World Over Pressure Can Be Brought to Solve the Race Question.

Apart from a confederation of the African tribes or peoples of African origin, the possibility of which is an awful nightmare to the white man, he lives in fear and trembling that El Islam may become the religion of the Negro. And why should it not be? “El Islam” would be a wonderful spiritual force in the life of the colored races, uniting us in a bond of common sympathy and interest. We could then add to our motto of one God, one aim, one destiny, the words one language, and that language would be Arabic. It could easily be made the universal language of Negroes and would remove the barriers which now face us in the intercommunication of the different tribes in Africa. Arabic is already spoken by millions of Negroes.

Most white missionaries in order to keep up and encourage contributions to their foreign mission fund sometimes draw upon their imagination when they speak of the number of converts to Christianity, and would have us believe that the poor heathen is anxious to see more white men leading them to peace and happiness. The majority of the converts to Christianity in India and Africa are of the lower caste, people who have nothing to lose by changing their religious views and practices, but who expect in the new order of things to become the social equal of their superiors. They belong to that type which toadies to the white man and tamely submits to segregation and discrimination, believing that the white master is good, holy, just and meek.

In spite, however, of the desperate efforts being made by the “other fellow” to convert the African to Christianity in order to make his enslavement

and exploitation easier and more secure, the African is slowly but surely realizing that under the Crescent he will be better able to reach the goal of his ambition than under the Cross. British administrators sometimes inadvertently admit that the Mohammedan natives are far superior in intelligence, morals and fighting spirit to the Christian native.

El Islam teaches its followers to be manly, self-respecting, charitable and ambitious, and, unlike his Christian brother, who waits for the good white man to restore him his rights, the follower of the prophet is always ready to draw his sword in defense of sacred right and honor.

Within recent years 53,000,000 natives have been converted to Mohammedanism in Africa. In Southern Nyasaland, where in 1900 you could not meet one native Mohammedan, there are mosques all over the country. In the region between Durba[n] and the Cape 1,000,000 natives were converted to Mohammed . . . last year. Under Islam a Negro may aspire to and attain any position in mosque or state, and Islam knows nothing of segregation and discrimination.

Yes, El Islam is spreading fast, and spreading not only in Africa but also in these United States. Within three months over 100 converts have been made to the cause of Mohammedanism in America. The spreading of El Islam cannot help but benefit the U.N.I.A. for they are desperately engaged in preparing for That Day—that day that we of the Universal are also preparing for.



Source: *Muslim Sunrise*, January 1921, p. 12; October 1921, p. 36; October 1923, p. 263.

**Akkad, Moustapha (1930–2005) *film producer, director***

Syrian-American filmmaker Moustapha Akkad was the creator of the horror movie *Halloween*. He was also the producer of *The Message* (1977), which some Muslims consider to be the best movie ever made about the Prophet Muhammad. Akkad was, perhaps paradoxically, one of the most successful commercial Hollywood producers and one of the most important Muslim religious filmmakers of all time.

Akkad was born in Aleppo, Syria, on July 1, 1930, the eldest of seven siblings. His father was a customs officer in Syria. At a young age, Akkad fell in love with the movies and



vowed to pursue a career in the business. In 1954, Akkad was accepted into the theater arts program at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and came to the United States, he said, with \$200 in his pocket. Akkad worked as a self-described houseboy in a mansion near UCLA, where he was president of the first Young Arab Organization. After earning his bachelor's degree in theater arts, he went on for master's work in cinema production at the University of Southern California (USC). At USC, Akkad met his mentor, the director Sam Peckinpah. In 1962, Peckinpah hired Akkad as production assistant for the movie *Ride the High Country*.

After achieving some commercial success as a CBS producer, in 1976, Akkad produced and directed a sympathetic biographical film about the prophet Muhammad, *Mohammad, the Messenger of God*, starring Anthony Quinn. It was filmed simultaneously in Arabic and English and was released in the United States in 1977 as *The Message*. While some African-American Muslims in Washington, D.C., protested the film's release, thinking that it might contain images of the prophet Muhammad, the film was careful to observe Islam's traditional prohibition against depicting the Prophet. Instead, all scenes in which the Prophet appears depict the drama from his point of view—viewers see exactly what the Prophet sees. Akkad was careful to consult broadly with Muslim religious scholars so that the film would accurately depict the life of Muhammad.

It was Akkad's next film, however, that catapulted him into Hollywood history. *Halloween*, an independent horror film made for approximately \$325,000, which Akkad provided, went on to make \$47 million in 1978. Akkad, who later bought the Halloween franchise, produced seven sequels to the successful, if gory, film.

By 1980, however, Akkad was back to making movies on Middle Eastern themes. He again directed Anthony Quinn in *Lion of the Desert*, which told the story of Umar al-Mukhtar, a Libyan resistance leader who fought Mussolini's army of occupation before WORLD WAR II. Quinn, who is joined by Rod Steiger, Oliver Reed, and John Gielgud, presents the tribal leader as a reluctant freedom fighter guided by the compassionate teachings of Islam. The movie, which was banned in Italy, was also controversial due to its financier, Libyan leader Mu'ammarr Qadaffi.

On November 9, 2005, Akkad was killed in a terrorist bombing at the Grand Hyatt hotel in Amman, Jordan, along with his 34-year-old daughter, Rima. He was buried in Aleppo, Syria, where approximately 1,500 mourners attended the memorial reception, which was also televised over Syrian television. A second memorial service was held on November 27, 2005, at Los Angeles' Islamic Center of Southern California, which Akkad had long supported.

*Edward E. Curtis IV with Samar Samara-Alkhayyat*

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### Akram, Wali (1904–1994) *religious leader*

Born Walter Gregg on August 4, 1904, in Bryan, Texas, Wali Akram played a central role in the development of Sunni Islam among African Americans in the first half of the 20th century. An electrical engineer trained at Prairie View State College, Gregg, like a million and a half other black southerners from WORLD WAR I to WORLD WAR II, moved north in the Great Migration from the rural South to the urban North. By 1923, he had landed in St. Louis, Missouri, where he converted to Islam under the leadership of Ahmadi Muslim American leader Ahmad Din (P. Nathaniel Johnson).

Like many AHMADI MUSLIM AMERICANS and Muslim-American converts more generally, Gregg took a new name, Wali Akram. In 1925, he married a fellow Muslim-American convert named Kareemah, formerly Hannah Dudley from Savannah, Georgia. Together, they had 13 children: Abdullah, Ahmad, Ali, Ameer, Hussain, Kamelah, Khadija, Khalid, Mahmud, Maryam, Mubarka, Nurah, and Rasool.

Around 1927, Wali Akram moved to CLEVELAND, OHIO, where he became a primary force in the establishment and growth of Islam among the city's black population. He first preached on behalf of the Ahmadiyya movement, the most successful Muslim-American missionary organization of the 1920s. Though the Ahmadiyya movement was often faulted later for being "unorthodox," it was under the auspices of the Ahmadiyya movement that many Americans such as Akram learned how to perform the Sunni Islamic rituals of daily prayer, fasting during Ramadan, and reciting the Qur'an. In 1930, Akram assisted in the establishment of the Ahmadiyya's First Cleveland Mosque, which was led by Ahmadi missionary Abul M. Fazl.

However, by 1937, a leadership struggle between Akram and immigrant Ahmadi leaders resulted in Akram's alienation from the movement. Akram rejected Ahmadi teachings that emphasized the role of the movement's founder, Ghulam Ahmad, as an Islamic religious reformer and began to associate with Sunni, or what he called "orthodox," Islam. Like most other African-American Muslim leaders in the 1920s



and 1930s, Akram saw Islam as a path toward the political and economic empowerment as well as the spiritual liberation of African Americans. He articulated this message in 1937 by creating the Muslim Ten Year Plan (MTYP), which advocated both an Islamic religious revival and economic empowerment among African Americans. Akram chartered the MTYP as a not-for-profit association and established groups devoted to the plan in other Ohio cities, including Dayton, Cincinnati, and Akron.

In 1943, Akram invited other regional Sunni Muslim leaders in PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, to the first national meeting of these religious congregations in history. On August 18, 1943, Muslims from NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, Philadelphia, Cleveland, NEW YORK CITY, and Pittsburgh came together to discuss their collective agenda as Muslim Americans. The meeting, which lasted four days, resulted in the formation of the Uniting Islamic Society of America (UISA), with Wali Akram elected president, but Akram found the group a difficult one to lead as the number of local African-American Muslim groups and multiple approaches to missionary work and political activism multiplied. Though the UISA would meet in 1944, 1945, and 1946, the organization lost many of its constituents. By 1946, Akram was leading a shell of an organization.

By the late 1940s, his authority was confined to Cleveland and the Ohio Valley region, but within these boundaries, he made several noteworthy contributions to Muslim-American history. First, unlike many other African-American Muslim leaders (including ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, leader of the NATION OF ISLAM), he supported the participation of African Americans in the UNITED STATES MILITARY during World War II. Second, he explicitly encouraged women's participation in various mosque activities. A 1945 photograph shows women at his First Cleveland Mosque sitting with male members of the MTYP; one of them wears a white veil, while others wear turbans and the same kind of hats worn in African-American churches. Despite his relative success as an imam, or "leader," Wali Akram had to maintain employment outside the mosque in order to support his family. Joined by his wife, Kareemah, he opened the Akram Family Store in 1951 and reportedly offered halal, or "religious permissible," meat to his customers.

By the 1950s, Akram still had hundreds of followers and remained the leader of the successful Sunni Muslim mosque in Cleveland. In 1957, he set out to perform the hajj, or "pilgrimage to Mecca," one of the five pillars of Islamic practice. According to a 1994 obituary in the *Cleveland Plain-Dealer*, hajj authorities in Saudi Arabia said that he was the second U.S. citizen to have done so. Whether that was an exaggeration or not, Akram's pilgrimage was a rare event for Muslim-American converts in the 1950s. He returned to Mecca two more times, in 1978 and 1986, and was often referred to in the Cleveland community as al-Hajj, or "the Pilgrim," an honorific title adopted by many Muslims who perform the hajj.

Akram continued to minister to his congregation at the First Cleveland Mosque through the 1970s and 1980s, teaching classes, burying the dead, and leading Friday prayers. He also guest lectured on Islam at Case Western Reserve University and Hiram College. In addition, he served as chair of the Community Relations Board of the local MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION and on the Cleveland Community Relations Board. He died on August 1, 1994, just a few days shy of his 90th birthday. More than 1,000 people attended his memorial service at Cleveland's Martin Luther King, Jr., Civic Center.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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### Ali, Dusé Mohamed (1866–1945) *Shakespearean actor, writer, pan-African intellectual*

Dusé Mohamed Ali began his career as a stage actor and finished it as an elder statesman of pan-Africanism, the movement to unite all people of African descent in the struggle for political, economic, and cultural self-determination. During the era of WORLD WAR I and the 1920s, Ali also played a vital role in popularizing Islam in the United States. Though he was not a classically trained imam—an Islamic religious leader—or even a well-funded Muslim missionary, he furthered the idea that the future of the black race in Africa, the Americas, and Great Britain was tied inextricably to the future of Islam and Muslims. For Ali, all people in Asia and Africa shared a common interest in defeating European imperialism, an idea that he emphasized in his publications and community activism.

Ali was born on November 21, 1866, most likely in Alexandria, Egypt, to an officer in the army. (Though some scholars have recently challenged the assertion that Ali was born in Egypt, Ali's biographer Ian Duffield has concluded that, in the absence of any contravening evidence, one must accept Ali's own version of events.) Like other Egyptians and subjects of the Ottoman Empire in the middle and late 19th century, he left to be educated in Europe. According to Ali, he began his education in Great Britain in 1876. One of Ali's adult contemporaries questioned this sequence of events, including the fact that Ali was born in Egypt, since Ali's knowledge of ARABIC and the QUR'AN, standard subjects for a young Egyptian Muslim male, was so slight. Much of the information about his early years is derived from his own memoirs, making it difficult to confirm various details.

Ali was educated at King College London by 1883, when, according to a Scotland Yard investigation, he traveled back to Egypt, apparently due to the death of his father in 1882. In 1886, Ali traveled for the first time to the United States as part of Wilson Barrett's acting troupe. Though he had only bit parts in the acting company, he later toured the United States as the "Young Egyptian Wonder Reciter of Shakespeare." In the 1880s, Americans of all social classes often attended Shakespearean plays—which would become "high-brow" culture later—and audiences were often eager to see Shakespeare performed in a novel fashion or by a novel actor, which Ali, as a fez-wearing "Egyptian," certainly would have been. Ali came a second time to the United States in the 1890s, this time visiting Ocala, Florida, among other locales.

Back in England by the first decade of the 20th century, Ali penned and performed two plays, *The Jew's Revenge* and *A Cleopatra Night*. During this era, he also performed *Othello*, a coveted role for many black actors in this era and afterward, and received praise in 1906 for his performance in Glasgow for *A Daughter in Judah*.

Ali also began to write on political matters, spurred into action by U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt's comments that violence was the only means by which a "fanatical" and "uncivilized" people such as the Egyptians could be controlled. Ali had been reading the works of many English-speaking black authors, including Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. DuBois, and J. J. Thomas, and he wished to strike his own rhetorical blow for the freedom of black people. In 1911, liberally borrowing from other works, he published the American edition of his first book, *In the Land of Pharaohs*, which severely criticized Roosevelt and defended the history of Egypt.

In 1912, Ali founded the pioneering *African Times and Orient Review*, a fiercely anticolonialist monthly journal of "politics, literature, art, [and] commerce . . . devoted to the coloured races of the world," which for Ali included Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans. Ali explained that he decided to enter the "world of Anglo-Saxon literature and politics" because the "truth about African and Oriental conditions is rarely stated with precision and accuracy" in the white press. This Anglo-Saxon ignorance, he wrote, "unleashed the hydra-headed monster of derision, contempt, and repression" toward people of color. Ali used his journal, which was distributed in Africa, the Americas, and Great Britain, to detail the desires of all colonized peoples for self-determination and the struggles of a black minority in the United States for equality. He wrote in 1918 that if the United States sent black troops to fight in World War I, "President [Woodrow] Wilson will be forced to see that those men who have fought for the freedom of small nationalities in Europe and elsewhere shall not be denied that freedom to which they are so justly entitled in the United States."

When African-American soldiers returned from World War I, they did indeed demand greater rights and freedoms, becoming more politically active in both domestic and foreign affairs. No black social and political movement benefited more from these determined voices for racial change than Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), a mass movement that advocated the creation of independent black businesses, schools, media, and political parties in addition to the establishment of an independent, black-run nation in Africa. The UNIA similarly advocated the idea that black people should be in solidarity with other colonized peoples and for a short time employed Ali as foreign affairs columnist for the *Negro World*, the movement newspaper.

A small group of African-American admirers of Ali's work, including John E. Bruce, urged Ali to be part of the American-based grassroots movement for change, and in October 1921, Ali arrived in New York, expecting to contribute in some way to Garvey's successful organization. In 1922, he was named head of the UNIA's African Affairs division and until September 1922 wrote for the newspaper. Among the several topics he discussed in his columns was the growing opposition in various Muslim countries against the abolition of the office of the caliph, the nominal head of the Sunni Islamic world, in Istanbul, Turkey. He also warned of the rising power of Muslims across the globe, urging the United States and Europe to help rather than hinder the independence of African and Asian Muslim states.

Internal disputes and the death of his patron, John E. Bruce, led to Ali's departure from the UNIA and subsequent unemployment. In a sense, Ali had already played his most important role in Muslim-American history. His publications, which were widely read by African-American intellectuals and then further disseminated in speeches, were already in circulation both inside and outside the UNIA. By 1922, the idea that the interests of black people and Islam were linked had no single champion; it had become a shared part of African-American intellectual life.

However, Ali's American journey was not done yet, and he moved to the American Midwest to begin again. While this period of Ali's life remains fairly obscure, it is clear that he was in the middle of if not a central figure in the emergence of both immigrant and African-American Muslim religious groups. Sometime in the 1920s, he attempted to establish an import-export company called the America/n African Orient-Trading Company at 2334 Pine Street in St. Louis, though this company was dissolved by 1927.

In the middle 1920s, Ali was also in DETROIT, one of the few cities where Muslims from South Asia and the Middle East regularly interacted with African-American Muslims and African Americans more generally. There, Ali wrote later, he led the Friday congregational prayers and in 1925, along with Shah Zain ul-Abdein, Joseph Ferris, and S. Z. Abedian,

established the Universal Islamic Society, also known as the Central Islamic Society, an interethnic Sunni Muslim religious group. In 1926, Ali served as secretary of the American Asiatic Association, also called the America-Asia Society, which reportedly drew support from the Iranian chargé d'affaires, the mayor of Detroit, and the Egyptian ambassador in Washington. In the meantime, to make a living, Ali also staged "two short Oriental costume plays" and gave lectures on various topics.

Once again, however, Ali seemed to develop difficult personal relationships with his colleagues and decided to move back to New York. In 1926, he attempted to establish a New York-based business that, like his St. Louis-based trading company, would give West African farmers direct access to American markets, bypassing the British-owned import-export companies that took such a large cut of the farmers' profits. He also continued to work on raising awareness about Africa and Asia through staging plays and giving lectures, but these endeavors did not meet with success. In 1931, apparently hoping to work with West African farmers in Nigeria, Ali immigrated to Lagos, Nigeria, accompanied by his white American wife or girlfriend, who went by the stage name of Gertrude La Page. In 1933, he established the *Comet*, a journal that achieved enough economic success to see Ali through his later years. He became a respected voice in Nigerian society and chaired the 1944 meeting that inaugurated the country's first grassroots nationalist movement. When he died on June 25, 1945, according to his biographer Ian Duffield, "Lagos mourned."

Dusé Mohammed Ali was a key pan-African figure. Born in Egypt, he spent his adult years in Great Britain, the United States, and Nigeria, and used his literary talents to spread a vision of black unity grounded in the struggle for political and cultural self-determination. He was also a vital person in the history of Muslim America. Though his religious organizations and businesses failed, his enthusiasm for the tie between black and Muslim peoples took root among African Americans. His ideas played no small role in helping to make Islam a multigenerational, 20th-century African-American religious tradition.

*Edward E. Curtis IV*

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**Ali, Hajj (Hi Jolly)** See HAJJI ALI.

### **Ali, Muhammad (Cassius Clay) (1942– )** *boxer*

Muhammad Ali is a retired heavyweight boxer and arguably the best-known Muslim in the United States. After winning the world heavyweight championship belt in 1964, he sparked controversy by announcing his conversion to the NATION OF ISLAM. His frequent denunciations of white racism and refusal to serve in the military during the Vietnam War provoked public outrage. He supported the leadership of W. D. MOHAMMED, who inherited the leadership of the Nation of Islam in 1975 from his father, ELIJAH MUHAMMAD. After retiring from boxing in 1981, Ali worked as a spokesman for the organization (later renamed the World Community of al-Islam in the West). After being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 1984, he also became an advocate for Parkinson-related charities and research. For Muslims and non-Muslims alike, he has long been the face of American Islam.

### EARLY LIFE AND CAREER

Muhammad Ali was born Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr., on January 17, 1942, in Louisville, Kentucky. His father, a painter, and mother, a domestic servant, raised him Baptist, and Ali attended Sunday school throughout his childhood. He began boxing at age 12. His tall frame and exceptional quickness gave him an immediate advantage over most opponents. In his first six years as a boxer, he won six Kentucky Golden Gloves titles, two national Golden Gloves titles, and a gold medal in light heavyweight boxing at the 1960 Olympic games in Rome.

Ali began his professional career with a victory in Louisville in October 1960. He quickly earned a reputation for cockiness, and his fights attracted national attention when he correctly predicted the rounds in which he would defeat his rivals. He later claimed that his bravado succeeded in both rattling opponents and drawing media coverage—two factors that proved crucial in his rise to stardom. In the early 1960s, he began seeking an opportunity to contend for the heavyweight title.

The early 1960s marked the beginning of Ali's relationship with the Nation of Islam (NOI). In 1961, he attended his first meeting after a member of the NOI invited him to hear a sermon at a NOI mosque in Miami. Several members lectured him about the NOI's philosophies, and he later recalled being intrigued by their emphasis on personal responsibility, self-discipline, and black pride. He started visiting mosques and speaking with NOI leaders, including MALCOLM X, who became a close friend. He also began to include members of the NOI in his entourage. Fearing that his affiliation with the NOI would frighten promoters, he attempted to keep these activities a secret, but the press soon reported his presence at NOI meetings.





During an overseas trip in 1964, boxing champion and Nation of Islam member Muhammad Ali (*center*) sits in prayerful repose at the Hussein Mosque in Cairo, Egypt. Though many aspects of the Nation of Islam's theology contradicted Sunni Islamic principles, Nation of Islam members incorporated various elements of Sunni Islam into their religious practice and considered themselves to be religious and political allies of Muslims around the world. (*Getty Images*)

### HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMP

Ali secured a title fight with the reigning heavyweight champion, Sonny Liston, on February 24, 1964. The promoters nearly backed out when reporters noted the presence of several Muslims, including Malcolm X, at Ali's training camp in Miami, but the event went forward when members of Ali's entourage persuaded Malcolm to leave the city until the day of the fight. Despite being heavily favored to lose, Ali defeated Liston to capture the heavyweight belt. He shouted to reporters, "I'm the king of the world, I'm the greatest. . . . I easily survived six rounds with that ugly bear because I am the greatest!" At two press conferences following the match, he announced his belief "in Allah and in peace" and declared, "Islam is a religion and there are 750 million people all over the world who believe in it, and I'm one of them. I ain't no Christian." In March, Elijah Muhammad, who had largely

repudiated sports as frivolous and discouraged his followers from engaging in them, publicly endorsed Ali's conversion by giving him his "Islamic name."

The public reaction to Ali's conversion was severe. At a time when many Americans felt threatened by "Black Muslims," his association with the NOI lent it prestige and proved a useful recruiting tool. He immediately became a symbol of strength and racial pride for the NOI. The media criticized him for endorsing the NOI's antiwhite rhetoric and racist doctrines. "The hysteria that has seized prizefighting since Cassius Clay came on the scene . . . has reached a critical stage," wrote *Sports Illustrated*. "Clay now acknowledges . . . that he is a member of the Black Muslim cult, a twisted form of Islam that advocates racial separatism." Ali received numerous death threats. His father, who remained an ardent Christian, told one reporter even before the announcement

of Ali's conversion that the NOI had "ruined" his son and that "[the government] should run those Black Muslims out of the country before they ruin other fine people."

Ali's loyalty to the NOI was tested later in 1964 when Malcolm X openly broke with Elijah Muhammad. Muhammad suspended Malcolm from the NOI and forbade other Muslims to associate with him. On separate but concurrent trips to Africa in the spring, Ali and Malcolm crossed paths outside a hotel in Ghana, where Ali gave Malcolm's greeting a cool response. Afterward, he told the press that Malcolm had "gone so far he's out completely. Nobody listens to Malcolm anymore." The two did not reconcile before Malcolm's assassination in February 1965. Ali later called their dispute "one of the mistakes which I regret most in my life." His loyalty to Muhammad cemented his status as the NOI's favorite son. For the next four years, the nation's official paper, *Muhammad Speaks*, devoted hundreds of articles and a regular column—"From the Camp of the Champ"—to his exploits.

Ali's African tour showed how important he had become in the developing world. Local crowds swarmed him nearly everywhere he went. During his stops, Ali made sure to proclaim his allegiance to Elijah Muhammad and to extol the virtues of the NOI. His trip drew international attention. One American Muslim later recalled, "When Ali would have a fight, it was headline news throughout the Muslim world. I used to have a few copies of clippings from *al-Ahram* newspaper in Egypt. He was a tremendously popular person."

#### ALI AND THE DRAFT

Already a controversial figure in America, Ali sparked outrage in 1966 when he refused a summons to fight in the Vietnam War. He explained that he was a conscientious objector whose faith prohibited killing. Though he appeared for his induction into the armed forces in April, he declined to step forward when his name was called, a felony crime that carried a \$10,000-fine and a five-year prison sentence. Boxing commissions throughout the country stripped him of his boxing licenses and his title. The NOI did not officially endorse Ali's stance. However, the nation worked to bolster his claims of conscientious objector status by portraying him as a sincere believer and a leader within the faith. He fought his case all the way to the Supreme Court, where, in 1971, the justices voted unanimously to release him of his military duty on a procedural technicality rather than rule on the NOI's claims as a legitimate religious movement.

During Ali's legal battles, much of the public began calling for an end to the war. The campaign for civil rights also gained widespread acceptance. Many whites and non-Muslims embraced Ali as a symbol of both movements who stood his ground against government persecution. As early as May 1967, a group of African-American athletes that

included football player Jim Brown of the Cleveland Browns and basketball players Bill Russell of the Boston Celtics and Lew Alcindor (later KAREEM ABDUL-JABBAR) of the University of California-Los Angeles had met with Ali to offer their support. In a *Sports Illustrated* piece that appeared shortly afterward, Russell wrote, "I envy Muhammad Ali. . . . He has something I have never been able to attain and something very few people I know possess. He has an absolute and sincere faith."

In 1969, Ali suddenly fell out of favor with the NOI by stating his intention to return to boxing during an interview with ABC. Elijah Muhammad, who believed that whites used "sport and play" to exploit African-American athletes, announced that Ali had "stepped down off the spiritual platform of Islam to go and see if he can make money in the sport world" and suspended him from the NOI for one year. When Ali protested that he needed boxing to pay his debts, Muhammad condemned his "waste and extravagance" and revoked his Islamic name. Ali's manager, Herbert Muhammad, a son of Elijah Muhammad, refused to schedule any fights.

After three years of exile, Ali returned to the ring in 1971. His first major fight came against Joe Frazier in what was billed as "The Fight of the Century." Ali lost, but he defeated Frazier in a rematch in 1974. His most famous bout also occurred that year, when he faced reigning heavyweight champion George Foreman in the "Rumble in the Jungle" in Kinshasa, Zaire. Foreman, a younger, more powerful puncher, was heavily favored. Ali had promised to "float like a butterfly, sting like a bee," but he stayed in the fight by employing a "rope-a-dope" strategy in which he leaned against the ropes and absorbed body blows until Foreman tired. In the eighth round, Ali suddenly attacked and knocked Foreman out to reclaim his title. The victory was one of the biggest upsets in boxing history. In a testament to Ali's improved reputation in the United States, President Gerald Ford invited him to the White House to congratulate him.

Relations between Ali and the NOI recovered during the mid-1970s. He remained publicly committed to the NOI and to Elijah Muhammad throughout his period of disfavor, and he slowly regained acceptance as his professional successes mounted. The death of Muhammad in 1975 allowed for Ali's complete rehabilitation within the NOI. Muhammad's son and successor, W. D. Mohammed, moved the organization away from racial separatism and toward Sunni Islam. He renamed the NOI the World Community of al-Islam in the West and began to accept whites as members. Ali supported these changes, and he later criticized Minister Louis FARRAKHAN when Farrakhan left the World Community to revive the NOI.

Ali's boxing skills began to deteriorate in the late 1970s. Many observers feared for his health, and W. D. Mohammed



urged him to retire. Ali ignored their concerns and continued to fight, losing and regaining his title in consecutive bouts with Leonard Spinks in 1978. He retired briefly in 1979 to serve as an American emissary during the Iran hostage crisis. When he returned to boxing in 1980, he lost his title in a brutal defeat to Larry Holmes. Ali became increasingly immobile and began to slur his speech. He left the ring for good in 1981. His professional record stood at 56 victories and five losses, and he had defeated every other major boxer in the sport's "Golden Age."

#### POST-BOXING CAREER

After retirement, Ali's speech and mobility continued to decline. He was eventually diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in September 1984. Doctors determined that his condition was caused by the excessive head trauma he had suffered during his career. The announcement was greeted with widespread grief from fans and sportswriters. "He wasn't just the greatest fighter I ever saw," said Howard Cosell of ABC, "he had a place in time and to understand that, you have to understand how sports invades the everything of society . . . I never dreamed he would end up this way." Despite his ill health, Ali intensified his humanitarian efforts. He visited dozens of foreign countries to campaign for world peace, child adoption, and social justice. He also took on a more active role within W. D. Mohammed's organization, serving as a spokesman, fundraiser, and financial backer as well as a member of the Muslim Political Action Committee.

Ali's mainstream popularity rose throughout the 1980s and 1990s. His rejection of race-based religion and embrace of Sunni Islam made him less threatening to white Americans. Meanwhile, Islam began to gain acceptance in the United States as America's Muslim population grew and became more visible to non-Muslims. Ali both contributed to and benefited from that visibility. He received endorsement offers, invitations to the White House, and civic honors, including the United Way's Spirit of America Award. He was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1990. Six years later, he lit the flame to open the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1997, he and George Foreman appeared at the Academy Awards to accept an Oscar for *When We Were Kings*, which won the Best Documentary Feature category for its account of their famous fight. United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan named Ali a UN Messenger of Peace the following year.

After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Ali appeared at Ground Zero to reassure non-Muslims. "I've been a Muslim for 20 years," he told reporters. "People recognize me for being a boxer and a man of truth. I wouldn't be here representing Islam if it were terrorist . . . Islam is peace." He later starred in a public service announcement aimed at convincing Muslim-majority countries that the United States

was not at war with Islam. In 2002, he visited Afghanistan in his capacity as Messenger of Peace. He received the Arab American Institute's Kahlil Gibran Award for Individual Achievement two years later. In 2005, President George W. Bush presented him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

In recent years, Ali has identified himself with SUFISM, or Islamic mysticism. He quoted Sufi authors in his spiritual autobiography, *Soul of a Butterfly: Reflections on Life's Journey*, which he published with his daughter, Hana Yasmeen, in 2004. Hana Yasmeen told an interviewer that her father had been inspired by the writings of Hazrat INAYAT KHAN. Ali's increased focus on spirituality convinced him to work more actively on interfaith issues. In 2003, he joined the Dalai Lama in dedicating an interfaith temple in Bloomington, Indiana. Afterward, Ali wrote, "I understand that there are many paths to God. . . . I respect people of different religious beliefs and agree that spirituality should be a central focus of our lives."

Ali's status as an American icon has had broad commercial appeal. A film about his life, *Ali*, grossed an estimated \$107 million in 2001. The city of Louisville constructed an \$80-million Muhammad Ali Center in 2005 to draw fans and biographers of the former champion. He has endorsed products ranging from Adidas sneakers to Apple computers, and in 2006, an entertainment company paid him \$50 million for an 80 percent stake in his image, likeness, and name. In 2007, he released a line of healthy children's snacks. His most celebrated matches have frequently been rebroadcast on television, and his famous taunts have endured in American popular culture.

Ali has long been the most recognizable Muslim in the United States. Since adopting Sunni practices, he has become a role model for immigrant and native Muslims alike. His transformation from villain to antihero to hero has given Muslim Americans a religious champion at a time when non-Muslims feel increasingly threatened by violent acts committed in the name of Islam. His especially venerable standing within the African-American, antiwar, and "baby boomer" communities has helped project a favorable image of Islam to these groups. At the same time, his fame across the Muslim world has served to remind foreign Muslims of the lasting presence of Islam in America.

William Brown

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### **Ali, Noble Drew (Timothy Drew) (1886–1929)** *founder of the Moorish Science Temple of America*

Noble Drew Ali was born Timothy Drew on January 8, 1886, in North Carolina. Details about his early life are obscure. Sources within the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America—the religious organization Ali founded in 1925—suggest that he was born to a Cherokee mother and a "Moorish" father and that he was initiated into an esoteric Islamic group at age 16 when he traveled to Egypt as a merchant marine. Ali also claimed that his religious movement began as the Canaanite Temple in New Jersey in 1913. However, none of these reports can be confirmed by sources outside the movement, and they remain contested.

Ali arrived in Chicago in the 1920s and began preaching national and moral renewal for black Americans. He founded the Moorish Holy Temple of Science there in 1925 and then changed its name to the Moorish Science Temple of America in 1928. Ali proclaimed a message of salvation to America's "so-called Negroes" that emphasized themes of black liberation. Claiming access to ancient wisdom he called "Moorish Science," Ali taught that black Americans were descended from Moors and that their true national religion was Islam. He identified his followers' ancestral homeland as Morocco and insisted that they were descended from the ancient Moabites described in the Bible.

According to Ali's teachings, black Americans would attain equality with whites only when they discovered their Moorish-American identity and returned to their true national

religion, Islam. Ali encouraged his followers to embrace their newfound cultural origins by wearing distinctive clothing, hyphenating their surnames with "El" or "Bey," and adopting Islamic titles such as "Noble." He also introduced a Moorish national flag, and, in 1927, the "divinely prepared *Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple*," also called the *Circle Seven Koran*. This sacred text not only chronicled the history of the Moabites and other Canaanite peoples but also recounted Jesus' activities in their lands. Ali derived much of his movement's theology and practice from American religious traditions of Islam and Freemasonry—especially the Shriners fraternal organization. He also borrowed heavily from Levi Dowling's *Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ* (1908) in his *Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America*.

Ali and his religious community flourished throughout the late 1920s, enjoying considerable public support for their parades and other celebrations of Moorish heritage and their entrepreneurial efforts to benefit the Moorish community. Suspicion fell on the Moorish community after the murder of Claude Greene in 1929. Greene, a popular civic leader and former business manager of the Moorish Science Temple of America, was shot and stabbed in his south side Chicago office. Rumors circulated that Ali instigated the assassination because he and Greene were embroiled in a dispute about leadership of the Moorish Science Temple and were competing for followers.

The Chicago police arrested Ali and dozens of other Moors as suspects in Greene's murder, but a judge released Ali on \$10,000 bond three weeks later. Meanwhile, public sentiment had turned against Ali and the Moorish Science Temple. The *Chicago Defender*, a prominent black newspaper that had supported Ali and his religious organization in the past, published a series of negative but unsubstantiated reports about him, alleging he had bribed the judge, seduced innocent teenage girls and young women, and swindled his followers of thousands of dollars. Within days of his release from jail, Ali was found dead in his apartment on July 20, 1929. No cause of death is known, but Ali's followers suspected that his death was caused by injuries he sustained while in police custody.

Tammy Heise

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### Noble Drew Ali

#### *Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America* (1927)

*Most of the Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America, the 60-page sacred text of the movement, was adopted from other texts. One was Levi Dowling's Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ (1908), a modern account of Jesus as a spiritual wanderer who traveled from the Middle East to India and other parts of Asia. Another source was an ethical manual called Unto Thee I Grant (1923). Noble Drew Ali combined these texts with some original writings. These revelations linked Moorish Americans—that is, black Americans—to the ancient history of the Middle East and North Africa. The text explained the complicated reasons why African Americans lost their connection to their country and their creed. Moors, taught Ali, were not part of any "negro, black, or colored race" but were members of the Moorish nation, the Asiatic race, and the Islamic religion. Ali's Holy Koran also explained how Marcus Garvey, the popular black nationalist founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, paved the way for Noble Drew Ali, who was chosen by God to lead his people back to their original identity. Ali was killed in 1929, but the growth of his movement continued, and Moorish lodges were founded across the United States. The popularity of the Moorish Science Temple was eclipsed by the rise of the Nation of Islam after World War II, though various Moors would preserve Ali's legacy and create new interpretations of Moorish Science.*



### Chapter XLV

#### The Divine Origin of the Asiatic Nations

1. The fallen sons and daughters of the Asiatic Nation of North America need to learn to love instead of hate; and to know their higher self and lower self. This is the uniting of the Holy Koran of Mecca, for teaching and instructing all Moorish Americans, etc.

2. The key of civilization was and is in the hands of the Asiatic nations. The Moorish, who

were ancient Moabites, and the founders of the Holy City of Mecca.

3. The Egyptians who were the Hamathites, and of a direct descendant of Mizraim, the Arabians, the seed of Hagar, Japanese and Chinese.

4. The Hindoos of India, the descendants of the ancient Canaanites, Hittites, and Moabites of the land of Canaan.

5. The Asiatic nations of North, South, and Central America; the Moorish Americans and Mexicans of North America, Brazilians, Argentinians and Chilians in South America.

6. Columbians, Nicaraguans, and the natives of San Salvador in Central America, etc. All of these are Moslems.

7. The Turks are the true descendants of Hagar, who are the chief protectors of the Islamic Creed of Mecca; beginning from Mohammed the First, the founder of the uniting of Islam, by the command of the great universal God-Allah.

### Chapter XLVI

#### The Beginning of Christianity

1. The foundation of Christianity began in Rome. The Roman nations founded the first Church, which crucified Jesus of Nazareth for seeking to redeem His people from under the Roman yoke and law.

2. Jesus himself was of the true blood of the ancient Canaanites and Moabites and the inhabitants of Africa.

3. Seeking to redeem His people in those days from the pressure of the pale skin nations of Europe, Rome crucified Him according to their law.

4. Then Europe had peace for a long time until Mohammed the First came upon the scene and fulfilled the works of Jesus of Nazareth.

5. The holy teaching of Jesus was to the common people, to redeem them from under the great pressure of the hands of the unjust. That the rulers and the rich would not oppress the poor. Also that the lion and the lamb may lay down together and neither would be harmed when morning came.

6. These teachings were not accepted by the rulers, neither by the rich; because they loved the principles of the tenth commandment.

7. Through the tenth commandment the rulers and the rich live, while the poor suffer and die.

8. The lamb is the poor people, the lion is the rulers and the rich, and through Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom, and Justice all men are one and equal to

seek their own destiny; and to worship under their own vine and fig tree. After the principles of the holy and divine laws of their forefathers.

9. All nations of the earth in these modern days are seeking peace, but there is but one true and divine way that peace may be obtained in these days, and it is through Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom, and Justice being taught universally to all nations, in all lands.

### **Chapter XLVII** **Egypt, the Capital Empire of** **the Dominion of Africa**

1. The inhabitants of Africa are the descendants of the ancient Canaanites from the land of Canaan.

2. Old man Cush and his family are the first inhabitants of Africa who came from the land of Canaan.

3. His father Ham and his family were second. Then came the word Ethiopia, which means the demarcation line of the dominion of Amexem, the first true and divine name of Africa. The dividing of the land between the father and the son.

4. The dominion of Cush, North-East and South-East Africa and North-West and South-West was his father's dominion of Africa.

5. In later years many of their brethren from Asia and the Holy Lands joined them.

6. The Moabites from the land of Moab who received permission from the Pharaohs of Egypt to settle and inhabit North-West Africa; they were the founders and are the true possessors of the present Moroccan Empire. With their Canaanite, Hittite, and Amorite brethren who sojourned from the land of Canaan seeking new homes.

7. Their dominion and inhabitation extended from North-East and South-West Africa, across great Atlantis even unto the present North, South, and Central America and also Mexico and the Atlantis Islands; before the great earthquake, which caused the great Atlantic Ocean.

8. The River Nile was dredged and made by the ancient Pharaohs of Egypt, in order to trade with the surrounding kingdoms. Also the Niger river was dredged by the great Pharaoh of Egypt in those ancient days for trade, and it extends eastward from the River Nile, westward across the great Atlantic. It was used for trade and transportation.

9. According to all true and divine records of the human race there is no negro, black, or col-

ored race attached to the human family, because all the inhabitants of Africa were and are of the human race, descendants of the ancient Canaanite nation from the holy land of Canaan.

10. What your ancient forefathers were, you are today without doubt or contradiction.

11. There is no one who is able to change man from the descendant nature of his forefathers; unless his power extends beyond the great universal Creator Allah Himself.

12. These holy and divine laws are from the Prophet, Noble Drew Ali, the founder of the uniting of the Moorish Science Temple of America.

13. These laws are to be strictly preserved by the members of all the Temples, of the Moorish Science Temple of America. That they will learn to open their meeting and guide it according to the principles of Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom and Justice.

14. Every subordinate Temple of the Grand-Major Temple is to form under the covenant of Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom and Justice; and create their own laws and customs, in conjunction with the laws of the Holy Prophet and the Grand Temple. I, the Prophet, Noble Drew Ali, was sent by the great God, Allah, to warn all Asiatics of America to repent from their sinful ways; before that great and awful day which is sure to come.

15. The time has come when every nation must worship under its own vine and fig tree, and every tongue must confess his own.

16. Through sin and disobedience every nation has suffered slavery, due to the fact that they honored not the creed and principles of their forefathers.

17. That is why the nationality of the Moors was taken away from them in 1774 and the word negro, black and colored, was given to the Asiatics of America who were of Moorish descent, because they honored not the principles of their mother and father, and strayed after the gods of Europe of whom they knew nothing.

### **Chapter XLVIII** **The End of Time and** **the Fulfilling of the Prophecies**

1. The last Prophet in these days is Noble Drew Ali, who was prepared divinely in due time by Allah to redeem men from their sinful ways; and to warn them of the great wrath which is sure to come upon the earth.



2. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus in those days, to warn and stir up the nation and prepare them to receive the divine creed which was to be taught by Jesus.

3. In these modern days there came a forerunner of Jesus, who was divinely prepared by the great God-Allah and his name is Marcus Garvey, who did teach and warn the nations of the earth to prepare to meet the coming Prophet; who was to bring the true and divine Creed of Islam, and his name is Noble Drew Ali: who was prepared and sent to this earth by Allah, to teach the old time religion and the everlasting gospel to the sons of men. That every nation shall and must worship under their own vine and fig tree, and return to their own and be one with their Father God-Allah.

4. The Moorish Science Temple of America is a lawfully chartered and incorporated organization. Any subordinate Temple that desires to receive a charter; the prophet has them to issue to every state throughout the United States, etc.

5. That the world may hear and know the truth, that among the descendants of Africa there is still much wisdom to be learned in these days for the redemption of the sons of men under Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom and Justice.

6. We, as a clean and pure nation descended from the inhabitants of Africa, do not desire to amalgamate or marry into the families of the pale skin nations of Europe. Neither serve the gods of their religion, because our forefathers are the true and divine founders of the first religious creed, for the redemption and salvation of mankind on earth.

7. Therefore we are returning the Church and Christianity back to the European Nations, as it was prepared by their forefathers for their earthly salvation.

8. While we, the Moorish Americans are returning to Islam, which was founded by our forefathers for our earthly and divine salvation.

9. The covenant of the great God-Allah: "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be longer upon the earth land, which the Lord thy God, Allah hath given thee!"

10. Come all ye Asiatics of America and hear the truth about your nationality and birthrights, because you are not negroes. Learn of your forefathers ancient and divine Creed. That you will learn to love instead of hate.

11. We are trying to uplift fallen humanity. Come and link yourselves with the families of nations. We honor all the true and divine prophets.



Source: Noble Drew Ali, *Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America*. Chicago, 1927, pp. 1, 56–60.

## Alianza Islámica

Founded in 1975 in New York City by Puerto Rican converts to Islam, the Alianza Islámica became the first U.S. Latina/o Muslim grassroots organization in the United States while at the same time creating the first masjid for the Spanish-speaking community. Ibrahim González, one of the founders of this organization, has pointed out that its foundation needs to be understood in light of the political and social movements of the time. While the Civil Rights movements had already peaked, there was still political unrest and considerable race and class struggle, which situated Puerto Ricans in New York at the margins of society. At the same time, most of the founders were also engaged in the Puerto Rican pro-independence and nationalist movements. In the midst of this revolutionary atmosphere, these Puerto Ricans in East Harlem converted to Islam and created the Alianza Islámica to channel their efforts to transform society.

Like AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM organizations (such as the NATION OF ISLAM), Alianza Islámica created community programs that deal with gang violence, drug prevention, and prostitution. Their work has been essential, as they have brokered truces between gangs, been involved in the development of martial arts classes for the youth in the interest of providing security in the neighborhood, and have provided mentoring and support to the different groups within the community as well as to inmates in local prisons, especially to members of the Latin Kings, a Puerto Rican gang from the area.

In the same way, Alianza Islámica has developed missionary programs among the community. Hajj Yahya Figueroa, who served as the Alianza's director, was heavily involved in these missionary activities, as he offered to speak at prisons about spiritual health and even to the difference between Islam and the Nation of Islam. Through the celebration of weddings, congregational prayers, sermons in both English and Spanish, sharing of traditional Puerto Rican dishes without pork, music and poetry gatherings, among others, Alianza was able to present itself as an integral organization of the local community, showing off the richness of the Latina/o culture and its connections to the larger Islamic culture.



In 1985, Alianza Islámica was housed on Lexington Avenue, near 107th Street, in East Harlem, but in 1997, the landlord raised the rent, so it was forced to move. Leaders, such as González, were not happy with this action because they thought that since they were Muslims, the landlord, who was a Muslim of Pakistani descent, would deal with them fairly. At the same time, they understood that this action may have been guided by the beliefs of some immigrant Muslims from the Middle East and Asia that Latina/os are not “good” or authentic Muslims because of the differences in language and background. This type of friction was also present between Alianza Islámica and the U.S. Latina/o evangelical and Pentecostal groups of the area, who felt threatened by it.

After moving from East Harlem to the Bronx, Alianza Islámica found a home on Alexander Avenue in Mott Haven. Because of the move, members had to adapt to the new surroundings. While continuing some of the missionary activities, they focused their efforts on providing needed social services, such as offering help to people seeking GEDs (grade point equivalency diplomas) and referring members of the community to AIDS counseling. As part of their educational mission, they offered classes in Arabic and held discussions about Islam, especially after the events of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.

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#### Amer, Ghada (1963– ) artist

One of several prominent Muslim-American female artists who have made vital contributions to American art, Ghada Amer has used different media, including painting, sculpture, and drawing, in works that have often explored issues of gender and sexuality. Expressing Arab, European, American, and other cultural influences, her work has resisted easy ideological divisions between the “East” and the “West” and instead has embraced what she has depicted as universal aspects of human experience.

Ghada Amer was born in Cairo, Egypt, in 1963. In 1974, her family relocated to France, where she later began her studies in art. She was trained first at the L’École des Beaux-Arts in Nice, where she received her B.F.A. in 1986, and continued her studies at the School of the Museum of Fine

Arts in Boston in 1987. Returning to Nice, she earned her M.F.A. in Painting at the L’École des Beaux-Arts in 1989 and completed her art studies at the Institut des Hautes Études en Arts Plastiques in Paris.

The majority of Amer’s works includes paintings, embroidered canvases, textile installations, sculptures, and several multimedia urban art projects. Her art addresses themes of women, love, sex, sexuality, spirituality, religion, and war and peace. Given these themes, Amer’s work became especially pronounced and public after the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, and like many other visual artists identified as Muslim, she began explicitly speaking to issues relating to Muslim women, though this was not always her intention nor necessarily visually apparent in her work.

Amer’s initial interest in themes of women and women’s bodies stemmed from an Egyptian magazine she came across in 1988. The magazine, *Venus*, took photomontages of Western models and superimposed on them more conservative and modest dress forms, including veils, making them more acceptable in what the magazine saw as Islamic norms. These photos inspired Amer’s art both in terms of theme as well as the more formal aspects of art making, namely, the idea of juxtaposing various art forms, the questioning of boundaries between East and West, and male and female boundaries in Western artistic practices, such as male art as painting and women’s art as craft.

Her early work in the 1990s explored themes of innocent and ideal love, while she continued questioning the formal aspects of art, resulting in stitched and painted works such as *Happy End* (1992), *Barbie Loves Ken*, *Ken Loves Barbie* (1995), and *Les Mariés* (1995). Continuing with the theme of women and love, Amer began exploring themes of unrequited love through works such as *Majnun* (1997), based on the medieval story of Majnun and Leila, and public works such as *Love Park* (1999), in which she installed a bench in a park with a sign in French translated into English as “In love, only conquest and breaking-up are important, the rest is filler.”

Ghada then began producing sexually explicit works. Sewing nude women in autoerotic and lesbian sexual acts, she began exploring female sexuality as a way of repudiating first-wave feminism, which often sought to deny women the right to their bodies and pleasure. This new work also examined the media and forms used in art, as she meditated on what it meant to use stitching and painting together to question “high” and “low” art forms. Numerous works were dedicated to these conceptual and aesthetic explorations: *Big Drips* (1999), *Black Stripes* (2000), *The Little Girl* (2001), and *Big Black Kansas City Painting—RFGA* (2005), among many others.

In November and December 2001, Amer held a solo show at Deitch Projects entitled *Encyclopedia of Pleasures*,

which was inspired by a 12th-century text that explored female sexuality in detail. Amer used this text as an example of how, over time, female sexuality became suppressed in both the Muslim and Western worlds.

In numerous other works, Amer has explored themes of peace. In a 2002 public installation at Art Basel in Miami, Florida, her creation of a garden with the peace symbol questioned the meaning of peace and evoked the difficulties of creating and promoting peace. In 2005, she presented her work called *Reign of Terror* at the Davis Museum and Cultural Center at Wellesley College in Massachusetts.

Amer has exhibited in numerous solo and group shows at such venues as Deitch Projects, New York; the Gagosian Gallery in London, New York and Beverly Hills; the Whitney Biennale, New York; the Gwangju Biennale, South Korea; the Venice Biennale; and the Johannesburg Biennale in Europe. She has exhibited works at Gallery Espace Karim Francis in Cairo, Egypt, at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, and at the Anadil Gallery in Jerusalem.

In 2002, she exhibited her work at *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* at the P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in Queens, New York. In 2003, Amer's work was included in *Looking Both Ways: Art of the Contemporary African Diaspora* at the Museum for African Art in Queens. In 2006, her work was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in a group show called *Without Boundary: Seventeen Ways of Looking*, an exhibit that explored themes of Islam and contemporary art and artists. In 2008, a major retrospective exhibition of more than 50 of Amer's works entitled *Love Has No End* was exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum of Art's Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art.

Munir Jiwa

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### American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) was founded in 1980 by James Abourezk, a Christian American of Lebanese origin and a former U.S. Senator from South Dakota. Since its establishment, the ADC has developed into the largest nonprofit, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan Arab-American organization in the United States. The

ADC maintains its headquarters in Washington, D.C., and other major offices in Massachusetts, Michigan, California, New Jersey, Ohio, and Texas. Additionally, it is comprised of at least 25 local chapters nationwide, with members in all 50 states. The ADC's membership is open to constituents of all faiths, backgrounds, and ethnicities.

Both Muslim Americans and Christian Americans have held positions in the ADC, though the religious identity of leaders has not been a prominent aspect of the organization's public identity. As a nonsectarian group, the ADC has attempted to unite Arab Americans to fight discrimination against Arab Americans, improve the image of Arabs in America, and educate the U.S. public about the Middle East. The largest grassroots Arab-American organization, it has garnered the support of Arab Christians and Muslims alike.

Like other civil rights organizations, the ADC has faced numerous challenges and even threats to its existence, none more important than a series of attacks against its Washington, Detroit, and West Coast offices in 1985. On October 11, 1985, West Coast regional office director Alex Odeh was killed by a pipe bomb explosion when he opened the door to his office in Santa Ana, California. After a rigorous investigation, the FBI did not charge anyone with the murder, although it stated publicly that officials in the Jewish Defense League (JDL) may have been responsible. The FBI offered a \$1-million reward for any information about the incident. As of 2010, the case remained unsolved.

U.S. involvement in the Persian Gulf War between Iraq and Kuwait posed another challenge to the ADC. In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, and the United States led an armed effort to liberate the nation. While some prominent Muslim Americans with close ties to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait favored U.S. military intervention in the conflict, the majority of Arab Americans opposed it. Echoing the calls of the Arab League and King Hussein of Jordan for a regional solution to the war, many Arab-American activists said that the United States should not wage war on Iraq. When the U.S.-led operation Desert Storm took place in 1991, hate crimes and other incidents against Arab and Muslim Americans soared. The ADC reported 119 hate crimes in 1991, compared to just four the previous year. The ADC's legal defense office advocated aggressive federal prosecution of those responsible, in addition to filing lawsuits in civil courts on behalf of Arab Americans. Four years later, when the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, was bombed on April 19, 1995, killing 168 people, the ADC struggled to defend Arabs against the suspicion that the attack had been perpetrated by Muslim terrorists. Although no Muslims were involved in the deadly bombing, the ADC recorded more than 222 incidents of harassment against Arab and Muslim Americans within three days of the attack and more than 150 hate crimes against them in the next eight months. The

ADC's legal staff again worked to defend the rights of the victims at the federal and state levels. In responding to the anti-Muslim hysteria following the Oklahoma City bombing, the ADC explained that the bombers were neither Arab nor Muslim. The organization criticized major news organizations for speculating that Arabs had been involved, and it pointed out the rush to judgment as evidence of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim prejudice in the United States.

In addition, the organization supported a "Reaching the Teachers" campaign that used a network of local groups to educate schoolteachers about Arab and Muslim culture. As the cold war between the Soviet Union and the United States ended in the 1990s, it became clear that many Americans thought Islam and Muslims would be America's new enemy, and the ADC, still nonsectarian, attempted to educate against that notion, defending Islam and its civilization's accomplishments against its critics.

In addition to offering legal defense to Arab Americans and educating the public about Arab and Muslim affairs, the ADC has lobbied the U.S. government concerning UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS. In 2001, it merged with the National Association of Arab Americans, the leading Arab-American lobby in the United States. Observing that the treatment of Arab Americans at home was tied to U.S. policy in the Arab and Muslim worlds, the ADC has consistently lobbied for a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and sought to protect American citizens of Palestinian descent from human rights abuses at the hands of the Israeli military. In 2003, the ADC opposed the U.S. invasion of Iraq and resulting IRAQ WAR, reflecting the views of the vast majority of Arab Americans. On those foreign policy issues that have divided the Arab-American community, such as the Lebanese Civil War in the 1970s and 1980s, it has taken a more cautious position.

Like other Arab and Muslim organizations, the ADC struggled to deal with the impact of the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, and the wave of hate crimes against Arab and Muslim Americans that came after it. In the first few weeks following the attacks, the ADC reported more than 700 incidents of violence directed toward Arab Americans, which it documented in its "Report on Hate Crimes and Discrimination Against Arab Americans." The passage of the USA PATRIOT ACT in October 2001, which granted the federal government new powers to detain and question potential witnesses, monitor personal communications without a court order, and arrest enemy noncombatants without evidence, made the task of protecting Arab-American rights even more difficult, though the ADC worked with powerful allies, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, in its struggle to protect the rights of its constituents.

The history of the ADC serves as an example of Muslim-American activism that is not primarily religious in nature.

Just as many Muslim Americans in the late 20th century began to focus on their religious identity as a source of community empowerment, the ADC emerged as an ethnic, nonsectarian alternative for political, legal, and community activism among Christian, Muslim, and Arab Americans. At the same time, the ADC's advocacy on behalf of people who happened to be Muslim American showed how much the fate of Arab Americans had become tied to American attitudes toward and relationships with Muslims both at home and abroad.

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### American Indian Muslims

According to some historians, Muslims came to the Americas and Islam was practiced by Native Americans long before Columbus arrived in 1492. Highly controversial and rejected by most American studies scholars, this theory uses archaeological evidence to trace the presence of Muslim Americans to the eighth and ninth centuries. Barry Fell, for example, has claimed that stones engraved in the ninth century with the Arabic words for Muhammad, Jesus, and Satan have been found in California, Arizona, Colorado, and Nevada, where Indians such as the Gladwin's Red Pottery people used to live. In addition, linguistic analysis has been used to connect the Algonquian and Pima languages to Arabic. Finally, Arabic manuscripts produced from the ninth to the 17th centuries indicate that a number of individual Muslim navigators may have sailed from North Africa or southern Spain to American shores before Columbus did, although these sailors did not establish Muslim colonies in the Americas.

Critics of this theory cast doubt on the body of evidence and logic used to support such claims: First, Columbus, who thought he observed a mosque at one point during his American travels, was intimately familiar with Muslim culture from Europe and thought he had landed in Asia. His preconceptions, in other words, led him to interpret Native American culture through an Islamic lens. In a similar way, the 19th-century white ethnographers who believed they observed similarities between Muslims and Indians were influenced by the idea that exotic brown peoples were essentially the same in their behavior. For example, one of the primary pieces of evidence used to link Native Americans and Muslims was the practice of polygamy, but Muslims were

hardly the only peoples in the premodern world to practice polygamy. Third, the later adoption of Islam by Native nations does not prove that Islam existed among American Indians before.

Another school of thought that attempts to establish the presence of Islamic religious practice among Native Americans traces the influence of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES on American Indians. Several escaped or liberated African-American Muslims may have lived near or with certain Native American tribes, including the Seminoles in Florida, the MELUNGEONS in Tennessee, and the ISHMAELITES in the Midwest. Some 20th-century American Indian Muslims who consider themselves reverts rather than converts to Islam trace their Islamic heritage to this historical exchange. For instance, Mahir Abdal-Razzaq El, a Cherokee Blackfoot American Indian, has said that he was born a Muslim into a family that had practiced Islam for several hundreds of years.

Finally, a third school of thought that analyzes the roots of Islamic religion among 20th-century American Indians emphasizes the decision of Native Americans to convert to Islam after learning about Islam from non-Indian sources. These sources include the 19th-century Anglo-American fascination with Islam and the Muslim orient, the development of Islam as a religious tradition of political protest among African Americans in the 20th century, and the presence of Muslim immigrants among Native Americans from the 1860s until today.

The search for the origins of Islam among Native Americans can sometimes obscure the stories of 20th- and 21st-century Indian individuals and the reasons why they have chosen to practice Islam. Little research has been conducted on their lives, and there has been no reliable estimate of how many American Indians identified themselves as Muslims at the beginning of the 21st century. The only evidence available is anecdotal. For example, the story of American Indian Muslim Lois Stands, a Lakota Indian convert to Islam, suggests how important it will be for future scholars to uncover such details of American Indian Muslim life. Originally named Wenya Chante Wishaka Uha, Stands was born sometime in the second half of the 20th century on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. She attended one of the many abusive Christian boarding schools geared to “civilize” Indians in the 19th and 20th centuries. Stands left the school but found her life on the reservation equally stifling. She moved to Rapid City, South Dakota, in 1983. After moving to ATLANTA, GEORGIA, Stands was exposed to Islam when she went to see Minister LOUIS FARRAKHAN speak there. The sound of the *adhan*, the “call to prayer,” at that meeting gave her the “same feeling” that she had experienced in a Native American sweat lodge on the reservation. Eventually, she came to be a follower of W. D. MOHAMMED,

the African-American Sunni Muslim leader, and left her Lakota community altogether.

Stands saw parallels between her old life and her new one. What Indians call the “the red road” and Muslims call the “straight path” is similar, she said: They teach one to be righteous and honest and to avoid acts such as cheating, stealing, or adultery. In modern industrial society, Stands told journalist Steven Barboza in 1993, religion is only “a segment of life,” but traditionally speaking, in both Islam and in Native cultures, “religion is the way of life.” So, Islam seemed familiar to her, even from the moment she first began to learn about it in the 1980s.

Stories such as those of Lois Stands highlight the individuality of Native Americans who have chosen to become Muslim while also suggesting that there are patterns in the conversion of American Indians to Islam: American Indian Muslims have identified Islam not as a foreign faith but one to which they have deep historical and spiritual connections. American Indians have been exposed to Islam not only by Muslim immigrants but by indigenous and especially African-American Muslims. Though the number of American Indian Muslims remains small, the fact that these Muslims find Islam compelling for a variety of reasons—and that there are multiple forms of Islam practiced in Native American communities—may mean an increase in future conversions.

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### American Islamic College

The American Islamic College was established in CHICAGO in 1981 on an impressive property with large existing structures located at Irving Park Avenue and Lake Shore Drive. This site was acquired with support from the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Islamic Development Bank. Academic programs began there in 1983, and the first president was Palestinian-American scholar-activist ISMA‘IL AL-FARUQI (1921–86). The first academic vice president was



Ahmed Sakr. G. H. Aasi and Asad Basool were the permanent faculty of Islamic studies and ARABIC, respectively. The board of directors included Muslim Americans such as T. B. Irving and Akbar and Jabir Muhammad, sons of longtime NATION OF ISLAM leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975).

One goal of the college was for Muslims to have their own institution of higher education in the United States and the other was to build bridges between the United States and the Muslim world. Initial plans included a college of education and a college of arts and sciences. By 1986, however, the institution was experiencing financial difficulties, and a new academic vice president, historian Robert C. Delk, was hired to put it on a sounder academic course. Political scientist Asad Husain then led the college from 1988 until 2004. Due to its failure to achieve accreditation and lack of course offerings and administrative structure, the college was never able to offer more than a limited range of subjects at the undergraduate level and eventually lost even its basic academic license.

Financial resources remained a problem, and a large portion of the building was rented to other educational enterprises. It also served as a dormitory for single Muslim men. After a lengthy court case involving control of the property, in 2006 the college was put under the supervision of Ahmed Fareed, an Egyptian-American educator, and a new board of directors. As of 2010, it remained operational, with limited noncredit courses being offered by the original staff.

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### American Muslim Alliance

The American Muslim Alliance (AMA) was founded in October 1994 in Newark, California, by Pakistani-American educator and political activist Agha Saeed (1948– ). The mission of the organization was to elect Muslim or like-minded candidates to public office and to form pragmatic coalitions with diverse political groups, ranging from the Christian Coalition to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In addition, the organization aimed to broadly foster Muslim participation in the American electoral process in terms of voting and ultimately in running for office.

The AMA had 40 chartered local chapters by the end of its second year, 63 by July 1997, 98 chapters in 31 states by 2007, and 110 chapters by 2009. Each chapter consisted of at least 30 dues-paying members led by one or two volunteer activists. Local activities included voter registration drives and candidate forums.

Just two years after its founding, the AMA used its influence to help defeat an incumbent member of the U.S. Senate. In the 1996 election, the AMA supported a drive to oust Senator Larry Pressler (R-S.Dak.), who had promoted an amendment to end arms sales to Pakistan. The Muslim community donated heavily to the Democratic opponent, Tim Johnson, who ultimately defeated Pressler.

In 2000, the AMA was one of the several Muslim political groups that formed a Muslim bloc to support the Republican Party and help George W. Bush become president. Muslims in Florida, the state whose disputed vote ultimately decided the election, voted by a large margin—perhaps 3 or 4 to 1—in favor of Bush. Bush won the endorsement of the AMA because, unlike Al Gore, his Democratic opponent, he opposed the use of secret evidence in federal terrorism cases (a position he reversed after the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001). In 2000, the AMA also attempted to woo Democrats by contributing to their campaigns. Hillary Clinton, a candidate for the U.S. Senate from New York, returned campaign contributions of \$50,000 from the group in response to complaints that the AMA leader, Agha Saeed, had made pro-Palestinian remarks.

Since 9/11, the group has responded to the new wave of anti-Muslim hate crimes and discrimination by continuing to train Muslim Americans in the art of American electoral politics. Issuing guides about the legislative process and grassroots activism, it has encouraged Muslim Americans to run for public office and has consistently hosted hospitality suites at both the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. It has also maintained a Web site with information and links to news stories and information on electoral politics.

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### American Muslim Council

From 1990 to 2009, the American Muslim Council (AMC) was a lobbying organization in WASHINGTON, D.C., that promoted understanding of Muslims in the United States and worked for their civil rights. Perhaps the AMC's greatest success came in its early efforts to raise the public profile of Muslims in the U.S. government, especially in government ceremonies and symbolic events. In 1991, for example, the AMC arranged



for SIRAJ WAHHAJ (1950– ) to give the invocation before a session of the U.S. House of Representatives, the first time a Muslim had ever done so.

The AMC, which was established and led in the 1990s by Eritrean-American Abdurahman Alamoudi, also successfully lobbied the White House in 1996 to hold a celebration to mark the end of Ramadan, the month during which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton invited Muslim-American leaders and their families for the first such event, which was hosted in 2000 by her husband, President Bill Clinton, and in later years by President George W. Bush. The AMC also called for Muslims to be appointed to more prominent government positions, which may have influenced President Clinton's appointment of Muslim-American M. Osman Siddique U.S. ambassador to Fiji, Nauru, Tonga, and Tuvalu in 1999.

In addition to raising the public profile of Muslims and their religious cultures, the AMC frequently joined other larger Muslim-American public affairs groups in lobbying for the concerns of Muslims both in the United States and overseas. During the BOSNIAN WAR of 1991, they campaigned against genocide in the Balkans. The AMC supported the Oslo accords signed by Israel and Palestine in 1993 but later denounced what they said was Israel's failure to withdraw from Palestinian territories. After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, the AMC immediately condemned the attacks as unjustified and pointed out that the United States was a place where Muslims lived peaceful and successful lives.

In 2003, the reputation of the organization suffered irreparable damage when its founder, Abdurahman Alamoudi, was arrested on charges that he had illegal business dealings with Libya, which at the time violated U.S. law. In 2004, Alamoudi, the Muslim-American leader who had met with senior officials in both the Clinton and Bush administrations, pleaded guilty to three counts of his indictment, admitting that he had traveled and engaged in commerce with Libya, had made a false statement on his application for U.S. citizenship, and had concealed information from the Internal Revenue Service on his financial dealings. U.S. District Court Judge Claude Hilton sentenced him to 23 years in jail.

The AMC attempted to reorganize, but it never fully recovered. On February 1, 2009, AMC national director Mohammadali Khan announced that the organization would cease operations. Though the AMC has "worked diligently in the civil and human rights arena since 1990," he wrote in an open letter, "we feel this work can be better done by organizations like [the] ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union], Human Rights Watch, ADC [AMERICAN-ARAB ANTI-DISCRIMINATION COMMITTEE], MPAC [MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL], and CAIR [COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS]." Khan also cited a failed merger with

the AMERICAN MUSLIM ALLIANCE in 2002 as a contributing factor to the organization's demise.

*Edward E. Curtis IV*

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**American Muslim Mission** See WORLD COMMUNITY OF AL-ISLAM IN THE WEST.

**American Society of Muslims** See WORLD COMMUNITY OF AL-ISLAM IN THE WEST.

## AMILA

AMILA, or American Muslims Intent on Learning and Activism, is an organization in the Muslim-American community that promotes several social causes, including education, female empowerment, and Muslim networking. The group's name is a play on words, as *amila* is an Arabic word meaning "to work" or "to act."

At its inception in 1992, AMILA formed the AMILA Constitution, which outlined not only administrative activities but offered a detailed explanation of the name choice. The use of "American" signified the group's strong association with American culture and values so long as they did not interfere with Islamic beliefs. "Muslim" was used to declare their religious faith. "Intent" signified that members would "dedicate the time and effort needed for the pursuit of the goals of the organization." "Learning" was outlined as the first goal of the organization. Finally, "Activism" meant that engagement with American society was necessary to achieve their goals. Many AMILA members carried a copy of the Constitution, which was read before the beginning of each meeting.

Begun in 1992, the group grew to include three chapters by 2008. These chapters were located in San Francisco, California; Madison, Wisconsin; and Austin, Texas. The organization was not exclusively Muslim, and non-Muslims were invited to events and celebrations. Membership to AMILA cost \$40 per individual or \$75 for a family. The dues were used to bring monthly guest speakers to AMILA chapters and host events for the public.

AMILA members organized events that showcased their full integration into American culture and society, an important feature of AMILA's goal of considering themselves common Americans. In 1999 and 2000, Islamic art fairs were

held in the San Francisco Bay area that demonstrated artistic “offerings that fuse traditional Islamic arts with contemporary American styles.” The exhibits featured ceramics, photography, calligraphy, textiles, paintings, computer graphics, and tile mosaics.

On November 14, 2001, Hina Azam, a Stanford doctoral candidate in Islamic studies, explained her reasons for joining AMILA: “[I] felt a disconnect from what we saw at mosques with more traditional leadership, and even from our parents . . . The vision of Islam we see in mosques that we don’t agree with is kind of reactionary and insular.” As a child, Azam had to hide her love for playing piano since Muslims in her hometown of Chicago criticized her for being frivolous. As an adult, she said that she was annoyed and that “my vision of Islam and of God always seemed to be so much bigger than what I saw or was taught.” Azam also noted that at AMILA she did not observe the “siege mentality” of Muslims against Jews or the anger present in some local mosques.

In 2005, AMILA made national news by holding a meeting at the University of California, Berkeley, that was led by Asra Nomani, a Muslim-American feminist. At this meeting, men and women prayed side by side, breaking the traditional practice of gender segregation during congregational prayer. While this meeting was criticized by local scholars and imams, or “prayer leaders,” for breaking this tradition, AMILA responded that it was not attempting to change Islam but to create a dialogue that was “intellectually free and open.”

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### al-Amin, Jamil Abdullah (H. Rap Brown)

(1943– ) *civil rights activist, Muslim leader*

Jamil Abdullah al-Amin was once H. Rap Brown, one of the foremost militants in the black power movement of the 1960s. Later, he converted to Islam and established one of the most successful black SUNNI MUSLIM-AMERICAN networks in the United States. A convicted murderer whose innocence is maintained by thousands of Muslim and non-Muslim supporters, Jamil al-Amin was a leading figure in both U.S. political and religious history in the 20th century.

Hubert Brown was born on October 4, 1943, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and joined the youth wing of the Civil Rights movement in high school under the influence of his older brother Ed Brown, who was a member of the Nonviolent Action Group (NAG) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) at Howard University in WASHINGTON, D.C. By the 1960s, Brown attended Southern University and became a full-time SNCC organizer in the Deep South, especially in Alabama, where the Lowndes County Freedom Organization emerged as the prototype for the Black Panther Party.

Even before Stokely Carmichael and Willie Ricks coined the “Black Power” slogan in June 1966, Brown was closely associated with proponents of self-defense. Popular in the ranks of SNCC, he was elected the national chair of the organization in 1967 on the eve of the July Black Power



Before converting to Islam while an inmate at New York’s Attica prison in the 1970s, Jamil Abdullah al-Amin was, as H. Rap Brown, leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Black Panther Party. He is pictured here in 1967 at a SNCC news conference. (*Library of Congress*)

Conference in NEWARK, NEW JERSEY. When urban uprisings in Newark and DETROIT, MICHIGAN, erupted that month, rocking the American political system, H. Rap Brown became one of the leading political agitators supporting the right to rebel against white supremacy.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the FBI and many police departments continued to be guided by the fear, first cultivated in the wake of the 1919 Red Scare, that black protest threatened the existence of the U.S. government. The FBI's COINTELPRO, or counter intelligence program, not only conducted surveillance on black leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., and Jesse Jackson, but infiltrated various organizations, including the Nation of Islam and other black nationalist groups. Inside these groups, according to FBI memoranda declassified under the Freedom of Information Act, FBI agents would intentionally cause dissension and urge group members to become more radical and even violent, hoping to produce enough evidence in such sting operations for arrests.

The program was designed to alienate, then isolate, and finally eliminate such movements. Brown explained the first step of that alienation and isolation in his 1969 autobiography, *Die, Nigger, Die*: "The tactic of media is to make you an enemy of the people. Enemies of the people are always vulnerable. The reason Malcolm [X] could be killed and Black folks didn't revolt is that the press had made Malcolm an enemy of the people. More Negroes were scared of Malcolm than whites."

As an outspoken critic who openly advocated violent revolt against police brutality and government oppression, H. Rap Brown became a COINTELPRO target. As the SNCC organization crumbled under government pressure, Brown was elected justice minister in 1968 of the Black Panther Party, which advocated black community control over African-American schools, politics, welfare, and defense.

He was accused of inciting urban uprisings. Like many Black Panthers, he became a target of government repression, and in 1971, he was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to Attica prison in New York State for armed robbery. Those sympathetic to Brown insisted he was curbing the drug traffic in Harlem and supported a national campaign to "Free H. Rap Brown!"

Sometime before his release and parole in 1976 from Attica, Brown converted to Islam and changed his name to Jamil Abdullah al-Amin. That year, Amin established a ministry in the West End community of ATLANTA, GEORGIA. In the West End, Amin developed a national reputation for community organizing and spiritual reform that combined to reduce illegal drug traffic in his community. The West End community praised him for working with youths and developing social service programs. In 1994, Amin published *Revolution by the Book: The Rap Is Live*. He was a major influence within Darul Islam, a national network of approximately 30 African-American Muslim mosques.

In March 2000, Amin was accused of murder in connection with the death of a police officer. The charges faced by Amin, stemming from an incident in May 1999, sounded painfully familiar to black power advocates and social activists from the 1960s and 1970s. Many thought the charges were "trumped up." In addition, the timing of the arrest seemed suspicious, occurring only a few weeks after the announcement of African-American Muslim unity between W. D. MOHAMMED and LOUIS FARRAKHAN in CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, which meant that there was growing unity among African-American Muslims.

The prosecution of Amin raised serious questions for his supporters in the black and Muslim communities: Was Muslim unity a danger? Did the government aim to destroy Amin? Such questions revealed the distrust of many African Americans and some Muslims for the U.S. judicial and executive branches of government, both of which had repressed African-American freedom movements for much of the 20th century. In 2004, Amin was convicted of murder and sentenced by the judge to life imprisonment plus 30 years. Supporters of Jamil al-Amin maintained his innocence and have continued to fight for his release.

Komozi Woodard

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**animal husbandry** See AGRICULTURE.

#### Arab-American Muslims

In the late 19th century, Arab-American Muslims began to arrive in the United States as part of a larger pattern of immigration from the Ottoman Empire, which ruled southeastern Europe and the Middle East. They have continued to immigrate to the United States since then. By 2000, the U.S. Census counted 1.2 million Americans who claimed an Arab ancestry of some kind, while the Arab American Institute and Zogby International estimated there were actually 3.5 million Americans with Arab ancestry.

While there has been no authoritative source to determine exactly what proportion of the Arab community is Muslim, various estimates based on the 2000 census in combination with other data established a range of about one-half to two-thirds, or from 600,000 to 850,000, including both immigrants and native-born Arab-American Muslims. These Arab Muslim Americans accounted for approximately one-fifth of all Muslim Americans, joining AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS and SOUTH ASIAN-

AMERICAN MUSLIMS as the three largest ethnic groups of Muslim Americans.

Arab Americans trace their roots to the Arabic-speaking countries in North Africa and the Middle East (or Southwest Asia), including Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Kuwait, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and other Arab states. According to the 2000 census, at least one-third of Arab Americans claimed ancestral ties to the modern country of Lebanon, with Syria and Egypt tied for second. One-fifth of Arab Americans identified themselves only as Arab, making it difficult to determine their national origins. By 2000, Arab Americans lived in every state, though half of them lived in California, Florida, Michigan, New Jersey, and New York. NEW YORK CITY, greater DETROIT, and LOS ANGELES were home to the largest urban concentrations of Arab Americans.

#### FROM THE CIVIL WAR TO WORLD WAR I

It is unclear exactly how many Arab Americans immigrated to the United States from 1865 to 1914, partly because the U.S. government did not have a separate category for Arabic-speaking immigrants from the Ottoman Empire. It generally classified them as being from "Turkey in Asia," meaning that they came from the Asian parts of the Ottoman Empire. During this era, the racial identity of Arab Americans was similarly ambiguous. While Arabs were often considered to be Caucasians, U.S. courts argued over whether they were *white* Caucasians. At times, they were classified, both in U.S. courts and among the American populace, as "oriental," "Asiatic," "Semitic," and "colored."

Perhaps the first prominent Arab-American Muslim in the United States was HAJJI ALI (ca. 1828–1903), also known as Hi Jolly, an Arab camel driver. Hajji Ali was brought to the United States in the 1850s by the U.S. military to explore the possible use of camels to connect the newly admitted state of California to the rest of the United States across the southwestern desert. Though camels were not adopted as an American mode of transport, Ali continued to work for the U.S. Army as a scout. He became a citizen in 1880 and changed his name to Philip Tedro, marrying an American woman and having two daughters.

Hajji Ali was rare. Arab Americans did not begin to immigrate in any significant number until after the Civil War ended in 1865. From 1869 to 1898, 20,690 "Asian Turks" immigrated to the United States. Most came in the 1890s, when the overall proportion of immigrants coming from eastern and southern Europe, including the Ottoman Empire, increased dramatically. Arriving from what was then called Syria and is now Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine, Arab Americans often traveled on crowded ships that docked either in the United States or Canada.

The proportion of men was especially high, as young men sought their fortunes in what they heard was the land

of opportunity. Most Arab Americans settled in New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and around urban centers such as CHICAGO and St. Louis. They entered a number of trades and professions, becoming dockworkers, lace merchants, manufacturers, peddlers, grocers, exporters, industrial workers, farmers, and journalists. They would make an especially important impact on the history of the automobile industry, including the Ford Motor Company, whose sociological department counted 555 Arab men among its employees by 1916.

In NORTH DAKOTA, where perhaps 30 percent of the total Arab-American population was Muslim, Arab Americans took advantage of the government homestead programs, which offered free acreage to those who would settle and farm it. Enduring the harsh, cold winters of the Dakota plain, they cleared the sod and in some towns, such as Ross, North Dakota, established a viable Muslim-American community. In their homes, they preserved the Arabic language and Muslim religious HOLIDAYS, fasting together during the month of Ramadan. They also slaughtered meat according to the DIETARY LAWS of Islam, buried their dead in a Muslim cemetery, and eventually built a mosque that might have been mistaken by those not from the Midwest for an outbuilding or granary.

#### FROM WORLD WAR I TO 1965

After the Ottoman Empire entered World War I on the side of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1914, emigration from the Middle East slowed to a trickle. According to historian Philip Hitti, Arab Americans were cut off from their homelands. Giving up the dream of returning to Syria with riches, they decided to establish themselves as a viable ethnic community in the United States that preserved their cultural traditions while devoting themselves fully to the nation. Arab-American Muslims, like Arab-American Christians, volunteered to serve in the U.S. military. According to War Department statistics, 13,965 Syrian Americans, 7 percent of the total Syrian population in America, served in the war. Since the U.S. military did not at the time keep track of the number of Muslims in the ranks, it is difficult to know how many of these Arab-American soldiers were Muslim. Through careful analysis of North Dakota war records, however, it can be determined that of 60 Arab Americans who served from North Dakota, at least 15 were Muslim.

By the 1920s, Arab-American Muslims had established communal institutions, including mosques, in various cities across the country. In DETROIT, Muhammad and Hussein Karoub created a Sunni mosque in 1921, and soon after, some other Muslims established a Shi'a mosque called Hashemite Hall. In Michigan City, Indiana, Arab-American Muslims formed the Modern Age Arabian Islamic Society in 1924. The year after, in 1925, the community in CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, rented space for a prayer hall; by 1934, they moved into



a purpose-built mosque now dubbed the “Mother Mosque of America.”

While the end of World War I in 1918 reopened the gates of immigration, the 1924 National Origins Act severely curtailed immigration quotas for those not from “Nordic,” or northwestern European, countries. From 1925 to 1939, less than 5,000 Syrian-Lebanese immigrants obtained permanent resident status in the United States. Some native-born Syrian Americans, especially those who did not live around other Syrian Americans, began to think of their ethnic roots as less important. Some Muslims in this period converted to Christianity. Other Arab Americans, including Muslims, strengthened the ties among themselves. In all cases, more and more Arab Americans strongly identified with the United States, and perhaps as many as 30,000 volunteered to serve as soldiers in WORLD WAR II (1941–45).

By the 1950s, many Arab Americans, both Christians and Muslims, had successfully and self-consciously integrated into U.S. culture and society, as sociologist Abdo Elkholy’s 1966 book, *Arab Moslems in the United States*, demonstrated. Though Elkholy’s study concluded that the Arab-American Muslim community in Detroit was socially isolated and socially conservative, he cheered the TOLEDO community’s embrace of what he called “Americanization.” Elkholy said that their strong religious faith in Islam had promoted ASSIMILATION, confounding the assumptions of many Americans who thought of non-Christian faiths as “foreign” and even “un-American.”

At the Islamic center of Toledo, also known as the American Moslem Society, Muslim leaders wanted its members to be patriotic U.S. citizens and proud Muslim practitioners. Like many American churches and synagogues, this mosque engaged not only in ritual activities but also became a place for business networking, socializing, and religious education. The mosque featured a youth club and a Thursday-night Arabic school; it also sponsored picnics and Middle Eastern pastry sales.

Elkholy determined that Muslims who actively engaged in the life of the mosque were more likely to embrace middle-class American values than those who did not. He studied the occupations and income levels of mosque members, and, to the surprise of his readers, he discovered that many of these Muslims owned bars and liquor stores. (Islamic practice opposes the consumption of alcohol.) Of Toledo’s 420 bars, 127 were Muslim-owned. Like other middle-class Americans in the 1950s, these bar-owning Muslims thought that upstanding American citizens should be members of a religious community, and in 1955, they donated some of their profits to erect a mosque. Because of the religious prohibition in Islam against the consumption and sale of alcoholic beverages, Elkholy speculated, these businessmen may have been especially keen to use some of their money to assuage their guilt.

Mosque members also acknowledged the validity of other faiths, regardless of language, nation, or race. They saw the need to adjust Islamic tradition to their particular circumstances. A second-generation Muslim explained that “Islam in America . . . has to take into account the particular features of the American culture. It has to be a living thing in our everyday life and it has to contribute its share to the culture surrounding us.”

Several members of the mosque married non-Muslims, often Christians. Non-Muslim spouses were welcome to participate in the life of the mosque without converting, though the children would often be raised Muslim. While believers argued that integrating Islam into American life required certain shifts in traditional practice, they maintained that these innovations strengthened the faith of Muslim-American practitioners.

Elkholy’s study revealed that by the 1950s, at least some Arab-American Muslims had embraced a social status as a religious minority that was middle class and largely assimilated, but his study also revealed that other Arab-American Muslims were disenfranchised and identified less strongly as Americans. Elkholy pointed to many sociological and cultural factors as the causes of such alienation, though he discounted what, in retrospect, was also a political problem—namely, the growing feeling among many Arab Americans, especially after 1965, that U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East unfairly favored Israel over its Arab neighbors.

### 1965–2000

As a result of the Arab-Israeli war of 1947 and the declaration of Israel’s independence in 1948, 1.3 million Palestinians became refugees. Between 1948 and 1966, 4,385 Palestinians immigrated directly to the United States, though the real number of Palestinian Americans was probably much higher. Most Arab Americans sympathized with their plight and thought that the quick recognition of the State of Israel by President Truman ignored the claims of Arabs to Palestine.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict loomed even larger in Arab-American consciousness after the defeat of Jordan, Syria, and Egypt in the 1967 Six-Day War. The quick and decisive Israeli capture of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights set off another wave of Palestinian migration, which created more sympathy for Palestinians and a sense that the United States needed to help them. Arab Americans were also angered by the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem’s holy places, including the Dome of the Rock—Islam’s third holiest site.

During this period, because of a change in immigration laws, specifically the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, the number of Arabs who immigrated to the United States expanded dramatically. Some of these new immigrants were highly educated, looking for new opportunities to profit from their skills and often seeking refuge from political turmoil in their



home countries. From 1967 to 2003, 757,626 Arabs, many of them Muslims, immigrated to the United States.

Together with native-born and naturalized Arab Americans, these immigrants sought to achieve a greater and more prominent place in American society and the political process. In 1967, they established the Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG) to educate U.S. policy makers and the public about the Middle East and the effects of U.S. policies there. In 1972, the National Association of Arab Americans formed in order to lobby members of Congress on domestic and foreign issues of concern. Then, in 1980, former U.S. senator James Abourezk, an Arab American of Christian background from South Dakota, established the AMERICAN-ARAB ANTI-DISCRIMINATION COMMITTEE. Nonsectarian, each of these groups welcomed the participation of both Christian and Muslim Arab Americans.

Arab-American Muslims of this era also contributed to the creation of many multiethnic, faith-based organizations and public advocacy Islamic groups. The ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA, founded in 1982, emerged by the late 20th century as the largest umbrella organization of MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS and their supporters. In 1988, the MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL was formed in LOS ANGELES to dispel stereotypes about Muslims and encourage the participation of Muslims in the political process. In 1994, the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS was created to defend Muslim civil rights and to educate the public about Islamic affairs. All of these organizations counted on Arab-American Muslim leadership or support.

The social and cultural contributions of Arab-American Muslims to U.S. society reflected their increasing diversity. Though many Arab Americans supported the idea of a united political front in public affairs, especially when it came to the issue of Palestine, they also maintained loyalties to their particular national, ethnic, or religious group. Shi'a Muslims from Iraq and Lebanon, for example, sometimes felt discriminated against by their Sunni coreligionists. Syrian Americans spoke a different dialect of Arabic than Moroccan Americans. Working-class Yemeni Muslim Americans often had had a very different historical experience than had upper-class Muslims from Cairo.

By the end of the 20th century, the United States had become home to an Arab-American Muslim population that reflected the very diversity of the Arab world itself. Some of these Arab-American Muslims such as AHMED HASAN ZEWAEL, an Egyptian-American Muslim who won the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1999, rose to the highest levels of achievement in their fields. Others, such as Shi'a refugees from Saddam Hussein's Iraq or Sunni refugees from Somalia, hoped merely to find employment, housing, and the chance to raise their children away from the political violence of their native lands.

## AFTER 9/11

Arab Americans, both Muslim and Christian, have always faced the threat of racially and ethnically motivated discrimination and violence. In 1929, for example, Nola Romey, a Syrian-American grocer in Lake City, Florida, was lynched by a mob after a dispute with the local police chief. Such retributive violence against Arab Americans and those who "looked" Arab did not disappear with the passage of civil rights legislation in the 1960s. As the United States became more deeply entangled with Middle Eastern affairs after World War II, hate crimes against Arab Americans may have increased. Specific events in the Middle East, including the 1973–74 OPEC oil embargo of the United States, the 1979 Iranian revolution and subsequent taking of American hostages, and the Persian Gulf War of 1991 resulted in various acts of discrimination against Arab and Muslim Americans.

After al-Qaeda launched coordinated terrorist attacks in NEW YORK CITY and near Washington, D.C., on SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, hate crimes against Arab Americans, Muslim Americans, and "Muslim-looking" Americans increased by 1,700 percent. As government leaders, including President George W. Bush, condemned such violence and urged calm, Arab-American Muslims rushed to condemn the terrorists and aid the victims of the attacks. Arab-American Muslim physicians and rescue personnel were on the front lines in New York, where, for example, Ali Taqi, a firefighter from Troy, Michigan, joined efforts to search for survivors in the rubble of the World Trade Center. Arab-American Muslims contributed significant sums to the Red Cross disaster relief fund: The Al-Aqsa mosque in Philadelphia raised \$15,000, while the Arab Community Center in Orlando, Florida, donated \$50,000. Arab-American Muslims across the country gave blood, held rallies in support of the victims, and participated in vigils. In Brooklyn, New York, Debbie Almontaser, a Yemeni-American interfaith activist and public school educator, held a multicultural festival and fundraiser with South Asian, Arab, and Jewish performers. Her son, Yousif Almontaser, a member of the National Guard, served at Ground Zero, the site of the destroyed World Trade Center.

Still, Arab-American Muslims faced backlash. Experiencing increased discrimination in the workplace, in school, when flying on airplanes, and in public spaces, approximately two-thirds of Arab Americans surveyed in a 2002 Arab-American Institute poll also feared that government profiling of them would have long-term negative effects on them. In the first few weeks of the attacks, approximately 1,200 mostly Arab men were immediately detained by the FBI on suspicion of possible ties to terrorism, even though there was no specific evidence linking any of them to the 9/11 attacks.

Under the USA PATRIOT ACT, passed soon after 9/11, the government gained new powers to monitor both citizens and noncitizens. The FBI also engaged in what was later

determined to be illegal wiretaps of U.S. citizens' phone conversations. According to the Department of Homeland Security, 82,800 foreign visitors, mostly Arabs and Muslims, were forced to undergo "special registration" by 2004—they were fingerprinted and photographed. Approximately 14,000 of them were deported on visa violations. It was, by far, the largest mass deportation ever of any ethnic or religious group from American soil.

Arab-American Muslim groups resisted these measures. Muslim groups such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations and nonsectarian groups such as the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee joined the American Civil Liberties Union and other non-Muslim, non-Arab public interest groups in the political struggle to protect the civil liberties of Arabs and Muslims. They also opposed, in large numbers, the Iraq War that began in 2003 and other aspects of U.S. foreign relations that they generally believed to be against the long-term interests of the United States. As the Supreme Court issued various legal decisions that limited the executive branch's power to detain people without cause and without judicial review, some Arab Americans felt at least partially vindicated by their faith in U.S. law and the U.S. Constitution.

### CONCLUSION

Since their arrival in the United States in the 19th century, Arab-American Muslims have made noteworthy contributions to the arts and letters, business, the UNITED STATES MILITARY, U.S. POLITICS, and other sectors of American society. Despite their long-standing place in American history, however, their contributions to the United States have not generally been noted by scholars or the general public. The invisibility of Arab-American Muslims in U.S. history is, at least in part, an ironic result of the recent influx of Arab Muslims to the United States. Because so many arrived after the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, many of the earlier accomplishments of Arab-American Muslims, including what they proudly embraced as their assimilation into American culture, lay hidden, out of view of the new immigrants and other Americans.

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the aftermath of those attacks changed that dynamic and transformed Arab-American Muslims into a highly visible and highly vulnerable religious and ethnic minority. As the first decade of the 21st century came to a close, the place of Arab-American Muslims in U.S. society remained fraught with anxiety. Arab-American Muslims struggled to be recognized as vital contributors to the multiethnic, multireligious fabric of the United States, but they also worried that they might always be seen as foreign and potentially disloyal visitors. It was likely that however they were viewed by their fellow citizens, they would remain at the center of debates about what it means to be an American.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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### Interview with Kassam Rameden, World War I Veteran and Farmer (1939)

*Perhaps as many as 30 percent of North Dakota's Arab-American population in the first half of the 20th century were Muslim. Most of them arrived in North America before World War I and came to North Dakota from Canada, the East Coast, or other Midwest states. Looking for employment, male immigrants peddled, worked as farmhands, or applied for free acreage from the government's homesteading program. Some also served their adopted country in World War I and by doing so achieved U.S. citizenship. One such Muslim American was Kassam Rameden, an immigrant from Syria, who left the "old country" in 1911 and, after working for others, became a farmer in the town of Bowbells, North Dakota. Rameden married Irish-American Bell Lynch and had five children. Interviewed by William A. Glen on October 23, 26, and 27, 1939, as part of the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, Rameden compared his upbringing in Syria to his adult life in the United States, recounting an immigrant's story with basic themes that were shared by hundreds of thousands who immigrated to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.*



I was born March 19, 1892, on a farm near Damascus, Syria. My home was a large stone house in which there were three rooms upstairs and three rooms down stairs. The rooms were rather large, being about 11 ft. by 20 ft. each. These rooms had fireplaces in which we burned hickory wood or charcoal. I lived three miles from a river in a very hilly and mountainous country. The climate was very warm—much like California. Sometimes during the winter we would get two or three feet of snow; but it would all disappear in a day or two.

Like in many European countries, the farmers lived in small communities, like towns, and farmed the land about them. They did not live in the country like we do in America. They raised many kinds of fruit, especially dates and grapes. Their food consisted chiefly of potatoes, meat, (no pork, because to them the swine is unclean) white bread, vegetables of all kinds, fruits, and lots of pastry, such as pies, cakes, and cookies.

I attended school about one year. This school was held in the church [mosque] which was built of stone. The school was much the same as you would call the parochial school here in America. The preacher was also the teacher; and the subjects taught were about the same as taught in American schools. But they do not have free education in that country. Instead of paying taxes to run the schools, as we do here, the parents paid the money to those who had charge of the schools. The amount each parent paid depended on how many children he sent. My father had to pay about ten dollars a year for my schooling.

We attended the Mohammedan [Muslim] Church and we had church every day. The services lasted about thirty or forty minutes. During these services the congregation would kneel, with their heads bowed to the floor and pray, while the preacher canted hymns. Our Sabbath came on Friday instead of Sunday.

As a boy, I worked on my father's small farm of five or six acres. I do not remember how much taxes he had to pay, but they were not high and were divided into four payments. The plowing was done with a walking plow and one team of oxen. The seed was broadcast by hand. On our farm we raised wheat, oats, corn, barley, flax, beans, potatoes, and other vegetables. The grain was cut with a cradle or scythe and placed in rather large piles on rope slings

and tied there. This would then be placed on the backs of donkeys, one pile on each side of the donkey to balance, and carried to the outskirts of the town, where it was threshed. To thresh the grain, it was spread on the ground and a team of oxen, hitched to a heavy plank, was driven back and forth over the straw until the grain was all knocked out. By this means the straw would be broken up fine. Forks with six or seven tines very close together were then used to throw the grain and straw into the air. This was kept up until the wind had blown all the straw and chaff away, letting the grain fall back to the ground pretty well cleaned.

My father could not raise hay on his small farm; so we used straw and the stalks of corn to feed the stock. We had six cows from which the milk was used to make cheese. We sold this cheese in Damascus, also other things we raised on the farm. We always were paid cash for the things we sold at the time they were delivered. Besides their fruits, vegetables, and grain, most of the farmers raised chickens, ducks, geese, and turkeys.

There were no, what you call labor organizations, in my home country. One had to work at least ten hours a day, for which he received from 25 to 50 cents. Before going to work on a job a man usually had to show that he had served his apprenticeship. This apprenticeship was served with little or no pay. It took about six months apprenticeship for most of the trades.

But it was not all work. We had parties much the same as you have in America, except that there was no dancing or card playing. The people would sit around and enjoy themselves visiting until time came for lunch, which was the chief attraction at all parties, with many kinds of appetizing foods being served.

When the boys were old enough to get married, the parents would pick out a wife and make arrangements with her parents for the marriage. They must have a license which was issued by a judge. Then, for three Fridays, the engagement would be announced in the church [mosque]. Most weddings were held on Friday, as that was our holy day. When I was a boy, the women in my country always covered their faces with veils at all times. Veils of brides were decorated with green flowers. After the ceremony the bride and the groom were placed on horses and led them about two miles out of the town, where a kind of celebration was put on. There were horse races, foot races, and there was a game of ball which

lasted about one hour. They would all go to the home then, where a big wedding supper was being put on by the parents. The couple always received many gifts of money.

Even when a boy I had heard my elders talk of the wonderful America, where opportunity was open to all, and where there was more freedom for every one. I did not want to have to take training in the Turkish army; so, as soon as we were old enough, my brother and I decided to come to America. Our friends and neighbors were glad for us. They had a big party for us before we left, where we visited with them for the last time and had a grand lunch.

We sailed from Beirut, Syria, about May 4, 1911. Crossing the Mediterranean, we stopped about three hours in Egypt and went from there to Naples, Italy, where we stayed for three days. From Naples we took a ship for New York City. The food and quarters on our boat were very good; and there was little sea-sickness. So we enjoyed the trip, landing at New York on June 6, 1911.

We went from New York by train to Sac City, Iowa, where I worked about a year in a packing house, receiving 42 cents an hour. I had a brother living at Sac City; and there were also several others of my race living there. I worked there the next year for my brother in a store; then, in 1913, I came to Bowbells, North Dakota. I worked there on a farm until 1914, when I went to Montana and filed on a homestead. In 1917 I joined the army and went with the A.E.F. [American Expeditionary Force] to serve in France. I was honorably discharged in 1917 and given my citizenship papers. I returned to the Bowbells and started farming in Minnesota Township, using horse equipment.

In 1921 I was married to Miss Bell Lynch at Minot. She was born of Irish parents on September 28, 1901, on a farm near Bowbells. In 1923 we moved to a farm in Clayton Township. We now have five children: Joseph, age sixteen and born in Clayton Township, and who now helps me on the farm; Mary Ann, 14, born in Clayton Township and staying at home; Alice, 12, born in Clayton Township and now going to school; Kassam, 10, born in Clayton Township and attending school; Raymond, 8, born in Clayton Township, and attending school. English is spoken in our home; and we get three newspapers to read in our home: The Bowbells Tribune, The Columbus Journal, and The American Legion Magazine.

I belong to the American Legion and the Farmers Union; and I have always been a Republican. America is the best country I have ever been in. I had lots of trouble learning the language: but now I get along pretty good.

Now we have another war in Europe [World War II]. I was glad to fight over there once, because we were told it was to "make the world safe for Democracy." This war, I think now we should stay at home.

Sometimes I think I should like to go back to visit my native land; but not to live. America is much better to live in than the Old Country in many ways. It is more freedom and easier to make a living. It is true that many people must have relief in these times; but that is not the fault of our government. It is fine that our government will help the people; but it should try to treat them all alike. I have done well here; but it has not always been good; some bad times, too. We had our best years from 1923 to 1927. Our worst years were from 1928 to 1939. During the worst of the depression I had to sell 20 head of my cattle to the government. I'm sure our standard of living was lowered much because of the depression. The only way I have to make a living is by farming; and farm conditions are very low. I belong to the Burke County Agricultural Conservation Association; and that has been a great help to me. I think that the most we need here is rain. Then North Dakota will be o.k. I think we would do better if we had irrigation in this country. But I do not think there is anything wrong with our government.



Source: William A. Glen. "Interview of Kassem Rameden." Works Progress Administration, North Dakota Writers' Project Ethnic Group Files, Series 30559, Roll 3, 1939.

## Arabic

Arabic is a modern language spoken on a daily basis by 200 to 300 million people in North Africa and the Middle East—and in the United States and wherever Arabic speakers have emigrated. Arabic is also the ancient language in which, according to Islamic belief, the QUR'AN, the sacred scripture of Islam, was revealed to the prophet MUHAMMAD from 610 to 632 C.E. As Islam spread in the Middle Ages from the Middle East across Asia, Africa, and Europe, it became the religion of people who were not native Arabic speakers. Since the Qur'an was believed to be the speech of God, Muslims



would often learn enough of the language to recite Islamic prayers and some passages from the Qur'an. Islamic scholars, no matter what their native language, became fluent in Arabic, which was an essential component of an Islamic higher education.

As a sacred language, Arabic has been recited or read by Muslims in the Americas since the colonial era. In the late 19th century, it was also spoken by Muslim immigrants from Syria and Lebanon, though many of these persons were not literate in written Arabic and spoke only a colloquial form of the language. In the 20th century, with the increased rate of conversion of Americans to Islam, the formal study of Arabic was introduced on a systematic basis, especially among African Americans. By the end of the 20th century, many Muslim Americans of all ethnic backgrounds studied the language formally—either in a college classroom or at an Arabic class in a mosque. While most Americans, including Muslims, found the classical Arabic of the Qur'an to be a lifelong challenge, the commitment to learning it reflected a central aspect of Islamic religious life.

#### ARABIC DURING SLAVERY

Most slaves who were brought to the Americas traced their origins to West Africa, and thousands, if not tens of thousands, of them were Muslim. While most were illiterate, a small number of these Muslims had advanced educations in Islamic studies and were able to read and write Arabic. JOB BEN SOLOMON (ca. 1701–ca. 1773) and LAMEN KEBE (ca. 1765–?), for example, once belonged to an elite class of Africans before becoming victims of the slave trade. The former was from a family of Muslim religious leaders, while the latter came from a family of teachers. Both were able to read and write Arabic. Knowledge of Arabic was brought to the Americas with the slaves; they could not learn Arabic after having arrived.

Educated slaves were able to rely on their Islamic schooling, which involved large amounts of memorization, to be able to reproduce Qur'anic verses (and sometimes the entire Qur'an) from memory. Some were able to use Arabic to write letters to friends and foreign dignitaries as well as to assist in translating from Arabic to English. A slave named Charno wrote the Fatiha (the first chapter of the Qur'an) for novelist William Caruthers, which he included in his book *The Kentuckian in New York* (1834). BILALI OF SAPELO ISLAND reproduced a long legal treatise taught in West African Muslim schools around this same time. Many slaves who were literate in Arabic were not literate in English. Abu-Bakr al-Siddiq was able to write in black English by using Arabic script to transliterate English as he heard it; he wrote "Afro-Jamaican English" in Arabic script for Alexander Anderson, a planter, between 1807 and 1834. A slave called London was able to transliterate Biblical hymns and verses using this same method when he was moved from Georgia to Florida in the 1850s.

#### EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

The first large group of Americans to attempt to learn Arabic for religious purposes was AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS. In the early 1920s, Indian missionary Muhammad Sadiq encouraged Ahmadi Muslim Americans, most of whom were black, to take Arabic-Islamic names and to learn their prayers in Arabic. Transliterations of Qur'anic verses—that is, the rendering of Arabic words using English letters—regularly appeared in the *MUSLIM SUNRISE*, the official newspaper of the movement.

By the late 1920s and early 1930s, African-American Sunni Muslims were also attempting to learn to recite or read Arabic. MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN, a Pennsylvania native who traveled to Egypt in the early 1930s to learn more about Islamic religion and the Arabic language, founded the ADDEYNU ALLAHE UNIVERSAL ARABIC ASSOCIATION (AAUAA) on August 18, 1938, in Buffalo, New York. The AAUAA offered African-American Muslims the chance to study Arabic grammar, the Qur'an, and the Sunna, or "traditions" of the prophet Muhammad.

Ezaldeen, like Sadiq before him, exhorted his students to give up their Christian names in favor of names from African-Arabic culture, which was seen as a path to spiritual salvation and earthly power. Ezaldeen also used an Arabic term to name the upstate New York farming community formed in the 1930s by his followers: Jabul Arabiyya, or "Mountain of Arabic-Speaking People." Command of the Arabic language was seen as a marker of ethnic authenticity. The more Arabic a religious leader knew, the more he was trusted and followed by aspiring African-American Muslims.

#### ARABIC IN THE NATION OF ISLAM

The NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), founded by W. D. FARD in 1930, did not make learning Arabic a central aspect of its religious teachings, and its members even prayed in English. In 1957, NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD published a manual on the performance of the *salat*, or the "five daily prayers," in which he indicated that believers should say their prayers in English rather than Arabic. Throughout the 1960s, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, the NOI newspaper, included a prayer column that also taught members to recite their prayers in English, often combining English translations of standard Sunni Islamic prayers with special dedications to NOI founder W. D. Fard and the teachings of Elijah Muhammad.

But some NOI members, especially those who had associations with Muslims outside the movement, did take it upon themselves to learn Arabic. In the 1960s, Akbar Muhammad, one of Elijah Muhammad sons, studied at the Mosque-University of al-Azhar in Cairo, Egypt. Some members of the NOI also learned to recite the *ADHAN*, or "call to prayer," in Arabic, while others listened to recording of professional Qur'an reciters.



## TWENTIETH-CENTURY ARABIC REVIVALS

As immigration from Arabic-speaking countries increased in the mid-20th century and especially after the passage of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, the number of Muslims who were literate in Qur'anic Arabic also increased. Their presence had an immediate impact on Muslim-American communities, since knowledge of the Qur'an and the Sunna in their original language was seen as an important qualification for leadership of a mosque. It was difficult for second- and third-generation Muslim Americans, who had not grown up around written Arabic or had the opportunity to study it intensively, to compete with these recently arrived immigrants for religious authority. For example, Imam HUSSEIN KAROUB, who in 1919 became the leader of the Dix mosque of Detroit, wanted to pass the leadership of his mosque to his son, Muhammad "Mike" Karoub, but many in the congregation harbored doubts about Mike Karoub's Arabic, which was spoken with an American accent.

Knowledge of Qur'anic Arabic was also valued outside of Arab-American communities. Partly due to Islamic REVIVALISM in the 1970s, which encouraged Muslims to read their sacred texts for themselves, Muslims of all ethnic and racial backgrounds began to seek more training in Arabic. In the United States, missionary organizations published more and more guides to learning Qur'anic Arabic, and local mosques that offered Arabic classes proliferated. In several instances, Muslim Americans traveled abroad to learn classical Arabic, sometimes remaining in Arabic-speaking countries for years so they might master the language. Like the pioneering Muhammad Ezaldeen, who went to Cairo in the 1930s, white Muslim American HAMZA YUSUF (1960– ) spent 10 years in the Persian Gulf and North Africa during the 1980s studying Arabic and Islam. African-American Muslim leader ZAID SHAKIR similarly spent seven years, mostly in Syria, studying the language and, in 2001, graduated with a degree in the Islamic sciences, including Arabic, from the Abu Noor University in Damascus, Syria. By the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Muslim-American college students were also signing up for Arabic classes and traveling to intensive-language institutes in North Africa and the Middle East. From the beginning to the end of the 20th century, learning classical Arabic had been transformed from the domain of religious specialists to a longed-for goal of thousands of regular Muslim-American practitioners.

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**Army** See UNITED STATES MILITARY.

## Ashura

Ashura is the 10th day in the Islamic month of Muharram. On this day in 680 C.E., Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of the prophet MUHAMMAD, was killed by the army of the Umayyad caliph Yazid on the fields of Karbala in modern-day Iraq. According to Shi'a Muslim tradition, Husayn was martyred for his open refusal to submit to the injustice and corruption he saw within the caliphates of Mu'awiyah and Yazid and for pressing his own claim to lead the Muslim community in Yazid's stead. The date and battlefield on which he was killed have become sacred to Shi'a Muslims, and they are remembered each year on the holiday of Ashura.

Ashura is observed throughout the world, including the United States, by a variety of rituals that include mourning and lamentation, recounting the events that led to the martyrdom of Husayn and his followers, fasting, and reciting the *fatiha* (the opening sura, or "chapter" of the QUR'AN) in memory of the Prophet's family and sometimes through self-flagellation, historical reenactments, and ritualized processions or marches. The annual festival of Ashura takes place during the first 10 days of the month of Muharram. It is a solemn occasion, and weddings and other more cheerful celebrations are suspended throughout the 10-day period. On the 10th day, special prayers are held at Shi'a mosques, followed by a specially prepared holiday meal. Those who are able, which in recent years has included millions of Iraqis who travel by foot, visit Karbala itself, now a center of pilgrimage in southern Iraq. Ashura rituals are central to the expression and maintenance of a uniquely Shi'a social and religious identity.

Ashura has been commemorated in the United States since the early 20th century, but only in recent decades has it captured public attention. In the 1920s and 1930s, before mosques and Muslim associations were opened by Shi'a congregations, Ashura was commemorated privately in individual homes by immigrants from the south of modern-day Lebanon. Groups of friends and relatives would gather to recite poetry and read or recite traditional elegies in commemoration of the martyrdom of Husayn. In DETROIT, where the largest concentration of Lebanese and Iraqi Shi'a reside,

in addition to BEKTASHI SUFI Muslims from Albania, DAUDI BOHRAS from India, and Pakistani Shi'a, public observances of Ashura began in the 1950s at Hashemite Hall, the Moslem Mosque of Highland Park, and the First Albanian Bektashi Tekke. When the Islamic Center of Detroit opened in 1963, it began hosting nightly lectures during the 10 days of Ashura, but it was not until after the LEBANESE CIVIL WAR in 1975 and the Iranian Revolution in 1979 that Muharram events in Detroit and elsewhere began to take their current form.

Recent Ashura observances have included nightly lectures given in at least a dozen Shi'a mosques in Detroit and its suburbs. Larger mosques host two separate programs of lectures and recitations, one in English and the other in ARABIC, Urdu, or Albanian. Iraqi mosques, with more recently arrived immigrant congregations, hold separate events for men and women, with a professional reciter hired to recite commemorative poetry and elegies, lead ritualized chanting and lamentations, and organize historical reenactments and public processions. The *husayniyyahs* (large lecture and social halls dedicated to Husayn, also called IMAMBARGAHS) of Shi'a mosques in Detroit are draped from wall to wall with large bands of black cloth printed with text from the Qur'an, elegiac poems in memory of Husayn and his followers, and common lamentations associated with the holiday, such as "Every day is Ashura: Every land is Karbala!" Likewise, Shi'a Muslims dress in black for Ashura or wear black headbands or armbands when attending mosque events. Large black banners are hung from the facades of mosques and houses, and cars are sometimes decorated with Ashura-themed bumperstickers and black ribbons. On the 10th day of Muharram, Ashura itself, mosques swell with thousands of mourners for one last memorial program that ends with a shared meal of *hariish*, a wheat-based porridge.

Smaller gatherings are also held throughout the month of Muharram, often hosted by women who hire professional reciters to lead ritualized lamentations and narrate the events of Ashura in private homes. These events have tended to focus attention on the historical significance of the women of the prophet Muhammad's family. Beginning in 2005, an Iraqi-led procession has also taken place in a park in Dearborn, Michigan; it draws thousands of participants, not on the customary day of Ashura itself, but on the 40th day after the martyrdom of Husayn. Similar processions are also organized in ATLANTA and NEW YORK CITY. Smaller and tightly cohesive Shi'a populations such as the Daudi Bohras have also made a point of traveling to Karbala or other important Shi'a shrines to observe Ashura together, including large congregations from across North America.

Ashura festivals have waxed and waned over the centuries. In some instances, the active observance of Muharram rituals has been banned or suppressed by anti-Shi'a rulers. In part for this reason, Ashura observances have often gained in popular-

ity and intensity during periods of political turmoil, as they did in south Lebanon during the civil war in the 1970s and the Israeli occupation in the 1980s, following the Iranian revolution, and in the wake of the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq. As elsewhere in the Muslim world, Ashura observances in the United States have often been controversial. Both Sunni and Shi'a Muslim leaders have argued that public expressions of Ashura are divisive. Others have found excessive lamentations and some of the more visceral ritual performances, such as nicking the scalp and shoulders to produce copious bleeding or flagellating oneself with chains, to be un-Islamic. These practices have been uncommon in the United States, and they have been banned in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon. Still others have lamented the focus placed on rituals and mourning rather than on the political example of Husayn's life and death.

While Dearborn and Detroit are centers of Shi'a activity in the United States, Shi'a Americans in other urban centers, such as Salt Lake City, Houston, LOS ANGELES, Atlanta, and New York, also commemorate Ashura, as do Muslims in Windsor and Toronto, Ontario, Canada. American Ashura customs are continuing to adapt and evolve, and a special effort has been made to make ritual texts accessible in English for American-born YOUTHS and new Muslims. Some mosques have provided instant translation technologies, while others have empowered their youth associations to host public commemorations featuring young professionals rather than trained clergy as their headline speakers. Muharram rituals have also moved online with the help of networking sites such as Facebook, sharing sites like YouTube, and simple Web sites such as karbala.com. Karbala "Open Mic" events, a Karbala Islamic Museum, and an online "Cyber Hussainiyyah" have also been established in recent years. These forums have given young Muslim Americans and any Muslims who care to participate the opportunity to connect with one another and to reconnect with the legacy of Husayn.

Through these communal expressions of mourning, Shi'a in the United States join the global observance of Muharram, a festival that ritually and symbolically links all Shi'a in time and space to Karbala, to the important events that took place there in the seventh century, and to one another. They have augmented the primary message of Ashura—that every day should be lived with the piety, conviction, and passion that Husayn exhibited defending his vision of Islam on the battlefield of Karbala.

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## assimilation

Assimilation is a concept used to analyze the degree of homogenization of a society that is religiously, ethnically, culturally, or racially diverse. It is generally applied to the study of immigrants rather than native minorities, such as African Americans or American Indians. Discussing the history of Muslim assimilation in the United States is challenging because both the content and concepts of American society have changed over time. Up until the late 19th century, American society was generally characterized as white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant. Assimilation was defined as the conformity of distinct cultures to the dominant culture of Anglo-Saxon Protestants.

By the early 1900s, however, new, more pluralist concepts of American society emerged with increased immigration of Catholics and Jews from southern and eastern Europe to the United States. These concepts emphasized diversity over conformity and envisioned America as a cohesive conglomeration of diverse groups of European ancestry. Varying metaphors—such as the melting pot, the salad bowl, and the symphony orchestra—were employed to capture the ideal of unity amidst diversity. The reforms of immigration and civil rights laws in the 1960s once again dramatically changed the makeup of American society by lifting immigration quotas that restricted entry from countries outside western Europe and by outlawing discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, and sex. These reforms made educational, social, and economic opportunities more universally available to women and minorities and as such made conformity to a dominant culture a lesser incentive for economic and social prosperity. The social changes ushered in by the legislative reforms of the 1960s helped alter conceptions of assimilation from unidirectional processes by which newcomers assimilate into the dominant culture to a set of diverse interactions and institutional structures through which varying members of society adapt to one another.

This changing of conceptions of assimilation over time demonstrates that the criteria used to measure assimilation at any point in time are more indicative of how American society has self-identified than of assimilation as a historical phenomenon. This is an important point to keep in mind when examining contemporary discourses on the assimilation of

Muslim Americans. Discussions of Muslim assimilation in the 21st century are preoccupied with the so-called threat of terrorism. In the current political climate of the United States, Muslim assimilation is measured not by Muslims' economic achievements or their participation in American public life, both of which are relatively high, but by the degree to which Muslim Americans support U.S. foreign policies and reject militancy. A 2007 report by the Pew Research Center, for example, found that Muslim Americans are “middle class and mostly mainstream.” It reached this conclusion by not only measuring Muslim Americans' views of American society and their educational and economic status but also their views of the IRAQ WAR, AL-QAEDA, suicide bombing, and “the War on Terrorism.” The use of the latter criteria suggests that contemporary discussions of assimilation have less to do with how well Muslim Americans have fared in the United States than with the degree to which the differences they represent could be accepted as part of the fabric of American society.

Whether or not the differences found in Islamic beliefs and practices could become a part of the fabric of American society remains to be seen. What is evident today, however, is that Muslim and non-Muslim Americans' grappling with the question of Muslim assimilation is forging a new Muslim-American identity that privileges being Muslim *and* American over other ethnic Muslim identities. When the first significant number of Muslims was brought from West Africa as slaves to the land that eventually became the United States, they did not establish a Muslim community. Rather, they participated in making a common African-American culture out of the varying African cultures represented in antebellum America. Even on the islands off the coast of Georgia, where there were dozens of enslaved Muslims who lived in close proximity to one another, no Muslim community emerged that survived the demise of the first generation.

The turn of the 20th century saw the immigration of Muslims from South Asia, Anatolia, eastern Europe, and Syria to the United States. The majority of these immigrants were men. They lived in small ethnic enclaves or workhouses. They associated more readily with coethnics than with other Muslims. Most did not practice their religion or practiced individually. Many married outside their religion. Few managed to pass their religion on to their children. Some small communities emerged between the World Wars in such places as Ross, NORTH DAKOTA; CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA; Highland Park, Michigan; and Michigan City, Indiana, but these communities were as much centers of social gathering for coethnics as they were places of worship. Over the years, members of these communities dispersed, and for many assimilation meant forgoing Islamic practices and identity. Only the mosque founded in Cedar Rapids in 1934 remains open today.

It was not until the 1950s when Muslim immigrants from varying Muslim-majority countries, many of whom had been politicized by pan-Islamic, anticolonial movements in their own countries, came to the United States that Islamic self-identification began to cross ethnic boundaries. This process was not complete; ethnic and racial differences have endured within many Muslim communities in the United States. Nonetheless, the 1960s marked a shift toward pan-Islamic rather than ethnic self-identification. While there were several examples of early multiethnic and multiracial Muslim-American organizations, such as the Ahmadiyya (1920) and Universal Islamic Society (1926), it was in the 1950s and 1960s that transethnic organizations such as the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA and the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION emerged as important voices on the national scene.

Many of the Muslim immigrants were students who were not at first concerned with finding a place in American society. When they decided to stay in the United States, they discovered a world of economic and social opportunity. Having arrived at a time when civil rights reforms outlawed discrimination in housing, education, and employment practices, they faced fewer institutional obstacles to social and economic advancement than had their predecessors. New immigration laws allowed them to reunite with their families in the United States. Telephones and airplanes made it easier for them to stay in touch with their homelands. In short, they did not face the restrictive conditions that led earlier Muslims to forgo Islamic practices and identity.

For these newer Muslim immigrants, assimilation occurred through adaptive processes involved in building Islamic institutions in the United States. The building of Muslim institutions has required immigrants to interact legally, religiously, and socially with the host society. They have had to adopt administrative practices designed for churches in order to establish their mosques and Islamic centers as tax-exempt institutions. They have had to engage in public relations and educational campaigns to reassure their non-Muslim neighbors, who are often ignorant or hostile toward Islam, of their good will. Part of this process has involved participation in interfaith dialogues with Christians and Jews. Muslim-American institutions also have had to adopt innovative policies to address the varying demands of their linguistically and culturally diverse congregations.

The building of Muslim institutions in the United States since the late 1970s occurred at the same time that the United States became more invested in oil-rich Muslim-majority countries and at times was confronted by Muslim groups that resisted or attacked the pursuit of its interests in the region. Consequently, Muslim Americans have found themselves in a contradictory state in which, on the one hand, the building of Muslim institutions in the United States has made

them invested partners in American society, and, on the other hand, prevalent negative stereotypes of Islam fueled by extremist reactions to U.S. foreign policies have colored Muslim Americans as potentially dangerous outsiders. The next phase in the history of Muslim assimilation in the United States depends on how Muslim and non-Muslim Americans reconcile this contradiction through mutual understanding of what it means to be both Muslim *and* American.

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## Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers

Since it was chartered in 1969, the Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers (AMSE) has served as a professional organization for North American Muslims who work in the fields of engineering and the natural and physical sciences. The AMSE, an offshoot of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA), began with a small nucleus of professional scientists and students and gradually expanded during the 1970s. When, in 1983, the MSA spun off the groups not directly focused on student issues, the AMSE served as one of the founding organizations of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA).

The AMSE has aimed to serve its members as both a professional and religious organization. As the professional guild of Muslim physical scientists and engineers—Muslim social scientists have a different organization, the ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS—the AMSE has offered its members opportunities for networking, technical training, and publication. Like many other professional organizations, the AMSE has also tried to educate the general public on the work of its members, highlighting their contributions to science, industry, and society. Finally, as a religious organization, the AMSE has sought to bring Muslim scientists and engineers together into a mutually supportive community, to engage in PHILANTHROPY, and to offer counsel concerning new scientific developments from a specifically Islamic perspective.



Conferences and publications have served as the two main activities of the AMSE. The AMSE has hosted special gatherings focused on particular themes, such as the "Workshop on the Islamization of Attitudes and Practices in Science and Technology," which was held in Herndon, Virginia, in 1987. It has also convened its annual conference in conjunction with the ISNA, offering its members a chance to network and present research. In addition to the proceedings from such conferences and workshops, the AMSE has published *The Muslim Scientist*, the official journal of the association; a directory of Muslim scientists and engineers; and an educational handbook for foreign Muslim applicants to North American universities.

The rapid development of the AMSE has paralleled the increase in the number of Muslim professionals working in North America, beginning with first-generation Americans but now including native-born Muslim Americans as well. The AMSE has demonstrated the desire by Muslim scientists and engineers to institutionalize, to create a professional guild that operates alongside the secular scientific associations but offers a specific Islamic focus. This pattern follows that set by members of other ethnic and religious groups in the United States, revealing the process by which Muslims find their place in American society.

Benjamin E. Zeller

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### Association of Muslim Social Scientists of North America

The history of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists of North America (AMSS) can be understood only in its relation to the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA), an earlier organization of Muslims in the United States. Founded in 1963 at the University of Illinois by the first generation of foreign Muslim students in the United States, among them ISMA'IL AL-FARUQI (1920–86), the MSA sought to provide an organiza-

tional structure for preserving Muslim identity and pursuing the study of Islam in the context of Western academia.

The founding of the AMSS in 1972 was a logical next step that provided a similar structure for recent Muslim graduates of academic programs and scholars of Islam in the United States and Canada. As one of several Muslim professional organizations, such as the Islamic Medical Association, established in 1967, and the Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers, established in 1969, the AMSS saw its mission as providing a forum for the development and discussion of specifically Islamic approaches to knowledge in the humanities and social sciences. The AMSS was cofounded by Isma'il al-Faruqi and Abdulhamid AbuSulayman. A prominent figure in American Muslim history and the history of Islamic studies in American academia, al-Faruqi was the first president of the AMSS and served for three consecutive terms until 1978. Al-Faruqi was then professor of Islamic studies at Temple University, where he had founded the Islamic studies program. AbuSulayman, from Saudi Arabia and at the time a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, is said to have provided al-Faruqi with the necessary monetary support for many of his intellectual projects.

Both al-Faruqi and AbuSulayman were also central to the founding of the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT (IIIT) in 1981 and the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) in 1982. Like other Muslim organizations established during this era, all of these groups were, in one way or another, influenced by the global Islamic Revival of the 1970s and 1980s. During this era, many Muslims sought to deepen their personal religious piety, and some Muslims, both in the United States and abroad, preached that Islam could provide a solution to the world's political, economic, and social problems. For al-Faruqi and some other Muslim Americans, a renewed commitment to Islam translated into an emphasis on socially conservative values and the reform of Muslim societies.

In its mission statement, the association emphasized its role in promoting Islamic positions on the production of knowledge in the humanities and social sciences, the fostering of conversation between Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, and the importance of Islamic heritage, civilization, and knowledge for the prosperity of Muslims and the betterment of humanity. These goals have brought up important issues, such as the possibility of faith-based scholarship in a secular academic environment and the universal applicability of Western theories and methods for the study of human societies in their political, social, and cultural dimensions. The AMSS has promoted the active participation of Muslim scholars in the production of knowledge about Islam and Muslims in North America, thereby providing alternative perspectives on Islam in a highly politicized academic climate.

The AMSS has held annual academic conferences, most often in cooperation with leading American universities, that have aimed to provide Muslim scholars with opportunities



to present and discuss their work with other Muslims in the framework of the production and distribution of Islamic knowledge and perspectives. In cooperation with the IIIT in Herndon, Virginia, the AMSS has since 1984 published a peer-reviewed academic quarterly, *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (AJISS).

Juliane Hammer

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### Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America (APPNA)

Founded in 1976, the Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America (APPNA) is a not-for-profit organization based in the United States with strong links to Pakistan. According to the organization's mission statement, it engages in "medical relief and other charitable activities both at home and abroad" while also "fostering scientific development and education in the field of medicine." In addition to its ongoing PHILANTHROPY in the United States and Pakistan, the APPNA contributed to disaster relief efforts following the tsunami in Southeast Asia in 2004, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and the Indonesian earthquake in 2006.

Formally incorporated in August 1977, the organization was originally named the Association of Pakistani Physicians of North America but adopted its new name in 2004. By 2009, the APPNA, whose headquarters were located in CHICAGO, had 29 chapters and 13 affiliated alumni associations. Its membership included 15,000 physicians and health care professionals of Pakistani descent in the United States. Active members are required to hold valid medical licenses and are encouraged to attend the association's annual convention.

The APPNA's public service work has been buoyed by a support structure of several subsidiary and associated organizations. The APPNA SEHAT, or Scientific Educational Health Administrative Training, was established in 1988 to promote health care in rural Pakistan. The acronym (SEHAT) means "health" in Urdu, Pakistan's national language. CAPPNA (Children of the APPNA) was founded in 1990 and SAYA (the Society of APPNA's Young Adults) was established in

1993 to sustain and further the social networks of younger Pakistani Americans. The PAKPAC (Pakistani American Public Affairs Committee) was founded in 1989 to serve as the political arm of the APPNA but has become autonomous, representing the political interests not only of Pakistani physicians but other Pakistani Americans as well.

Mashal Saif

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### Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta is the capital of Georgia and one of the largest cities in the South. By 2010, the Atlanta metropolitan area had become home to at least three dozen mosques and prayer halls and counted 80,000 Muslims representing a spectrum of sectarian, ethnic, and national distinctions. The largest racial-ethnic groups were African Americans, South Asians, and East Africans, with sizeable Arab, West African, Bosnian, Turkish, and Southeast Asian communities as well. The growth of the Muslim population in Atlanta has coincided with the rise of the city as a major international metropolitan center in North America over the last three decades.

Before the 1970s, one of the few visible Muslim communities in the city was the NATION OF ISLAM headed by ELIJAH MUHAMMAD in CHICAGO. After President Lyndon Johnson signed the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, the number of foreign-born Muslims in Atlanta increased. Students seeking higher education enrolled in Georgia Tech University, located in Atlanta's downtown. At the same time that they were moving to the city, African-American Muslim leader JAMIL ABDULLAH AL-AMIN established a popular mosque in the West End neighborhood, and W. D. MOHAMMED led the Nation of Islam community toward Sunni Islam.

#### THE ATLANTA MASJID OF AL-ISLAM

Located southeast of metropolitan Atlanta in Decatur, with its historic roots in the Nation of Islam, the Atlanta Masjid of Al-Islam is the first and oldest Muslim organization in the city. The community's first mosque, Temple No. 15, was founded in 1958 in the Bankhead neighborhood, west of downtown Atlanta. MALCOLM X visited Atlanta in 1954 as part of his nationwide efforts to promote the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, who also visited the city in the late 1950s. In 1974, some Nation of

Islam members purchased a funeral home in southeast Atlanta near the East Lake Meadows, a public housing project known at the time as “Little Vietnam” because of the high rate of violent crime in the area. As part of larger transformations in the organization, W. D. Mohammed sent Imam Ibrahim Pasha to replace Abdul Rahman Akeel, the minister of Temple No. 15.

In 1991, the Atlanta Masjid purchased another nearby site, which became its primary location. The older temple site was transformed into the W. D. Mohammed Schools. The Mohammed Schools consist of two administrative units: the Sister Clara Muhammad K-8 elementary and junior high and the W. D. Mohammed High School. They received accreditation in the late 1990s and have since served Muslims and non-Muslims in the surrounding community. One alumna, Jamillah Karim, went on to earn a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from Duke University and is now professor of religion at Spelman College.

In 2000, SHAREEF ABDUR-RAHIM, a professional basketball player for the Atlanta Hawks, made a donation that contributed to the building of a gymnasium for the high school. The girls’ high school basketball team, the Lady Caliphs, reached the Georgia state playoffs in 2006 and 2007. Playing in sweatpants and headscarves, their achievements earned them a nationally broadcast segment on ESPN.

Until his retirement in 2009, Imam Plemon T. El-Amin, a Harvard graduate and a native of Atlanta, was the leader of the Atlanta Masjid. A central player in the life of the community for approximately three decades, El-Amin was elected resident imam in 1985. El-Amin converted to Islam in 1974, was mentored by W. D. Mohammed, and has remained an active supporter of Mohammed’s ministry. El-Amin accompanied Mohammed on three separate trips to Saudi Arabia and more recently visited Saudi Arabia as a representative of Mohammed and personal guest of Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz. From 1990 to 2000, he served as chairman of the National Conventions, the national forum that organizes annual meetings of communities affiliated with the leadership of W. D. Muhammad.

Imam Plemon El-Amin has also been an active figure in Atlanta’s religious landscape. He has served on Emory University’s Religious Advisory Board, the Georgia Commission on Human Relations, and several interfaith advisory boards to Atlanta’s mayors, helping to develop interfaith networks in Atlanta. His efforts contributed to the formation of the Faith Alliance of Metro Atlanta (FAMA) in 2000. In 1995, El-Amin delivered the opening prayer before the Georgia House of Representatives. He has also led numerous delegations to Muslim-majority countries as part of the World Pilgrims Tour. Operated by FAMA, this tour has invited religious leaders and congregants to explore historical sites of Jewish-Christian-Muslim interaction in Jerusalem, Spain, Turkey, and Greece. From 2004 to 2007, El-Amin served as chairman of FAMA.

Imam Plemon’s leadership skills were in part groomed under Imam Ibrahim Pasha, who was imam from 1975 to 1985. Pasha was raised in Chicago, where his grandmother introduced him to the Nation of Islam. She had converted to the Nation of Islam in the 1930s, and this long-standing relationship between the Pasha family and the Muhammad family led to Pasha’s appointment as leader of the Atlanta community. Pasha had also served as a first lieutenant in the FRUIT OF ISLAM, the all-male section of the Nation of Islam. He was a key figure in the Atlanta community’s transition to Sunni Islam and has remained a prominent national spokesman for W. D. Mohammed.

### AL-FAROOQ MASJID AND ITS AFFILIATES

Born to meet the demands of a growing South-Asian immigrant community of Muslim students at Georgia Tech University and other recent arrivals, al-Farooq Masjid was founded in 1980 in central downtown Atlanta, just west of the I-75–I-85 “connector.” In 1990, the community started a parochial K-8 school, Dar-un Noor, followed in 1992 by the establishment of Dar-ul Uloom, which has focused on housing students seeking acquisition of the basic Islamic sciences and memorization of the QUR’AN. Later, Masjid Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz was founded in the Atlanta suburb of Norcross as another administrative unit of al-Farooq Masjid.

In 1999, al-Farooq embarked upon ambitious expansion plans for its facilities at the downtown location. The new mosque project was completed in 2008 and can house an estimated 5,000 worshippers. With two bright orange domes and a towering minaret, the mosque has made its mark on Atlanta’s ever growing skyline.

Al-Farooq Masjid has maintained active ties with nationwide Muslim organizations and networks as well as cultivated relationships with non-Muslim communities in the city. The al-Maghrib Institute, an innovative Islamic education program that combines online and correspondence courses, has held weekend seminars at the mosque. TABLIGHI JAMA’AT gatherings have also been a regular feature of the community. The Georgia Tech MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION has maintained close ties with the community, though the campus group holds its own Friday prayer service.

Cardiologist Khalid Siddiq, one of al-Farooq’s lay leaders, has been an active figure in Atlanta’s interfaith scene, cooperating with Imam Plemon at the Atlanta Masjid. He has also appeared regularly on local radio broadcasts and given many public addresses.

### THE WEST END COMMUNITY MOSQUE

In 1976, the same year of his release from Attica prison, former civil rights leader and Black Panther H. Rap Brown, now Imam JAMIL ABDULLAH AL-AMIN, moved to the historic West End district of Atlanta and established the Community

Mosque. In 1979, the community became formally affiliated with the national Darul Islam (DAR) movement, then headed by Imam Yahya Abdul Karim, through an Islamic oath of allegiance (*bayat*). However, by this time the DAR had already become weakened as a national movement due to competition with the rival Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood (MIB) and the ISLAMIC PARTY OF NORTH AMERICA (IPNA), and, perhaps most significantly, because of the rise of the al-Fuqra Sufi movement of Sheikh Syed Gilani. In 1982, the Community Mosque ended its affiliation with the DAR and al-Fuqra and reconsolidated elements of other orthodox DAR splinter groups under the leadership of al-Amin; the community was now known as the National Community. At its height, the National Community included approximately 30 mosques that pledged their allegiance to al-Amin.

With a focus on the needs of indigenous Muslims and weary of foreign influences that had disturbed other indigenous movements, the National Community emphasized recruitment and local community initiatives. These included the establishment of a school, sponsorship and partnership of Muslim-owned businesses, the creation of the Jawala scouts (a young boys' organization that teaches outdoor skills and athletics), and the founding of the annual Riyaadah sports competition.

In 2007, the Riyaadah hosted its 25th anniversary at Morris Brown College in Atlanta. In addition to sponsoring youth competitions, the Riyaadah has served as the regular gathering for the National Community and its affiliates. It is held in a different city each year. Many guests and nonmembers often participate in the popular meeting. The event has included Islamic educational programming and has hosted scholars from various Muslim communities and organizations. It has also provided a venue for vendors and booksellers to promote their products. The acclaimed African-American martial artist Moses Powell, a member of Malcolm X's Temple No. 7 in New York and a resident of the West End in the 1980s, held demonstrations of his Sanuces Ryu Jiu-Jitsu at the Riyaadah. Sanuces Ryu Jiu-Jitsu was designed by Powell to train Muslim communities in self-defense against the often hostile urban environments where Muslim populations were growing.

The West End neighborhood, like other inner-city areas of Atlanta, was subject to increasing crime rates and drug infestation in the 1980s. The Community Mosque sought to curb such influences by instituting a self-policing neighborhood patrol called a *suttrah* while simultaneously arranging "peace treaties" with area gangs. The successful impact of this strategy garnered the appreciation of both non-Muslim residents and local law enforcement.

The controversial and disputed conviction and imprisonment of Jamil Abdullah al-Amin for murder in 2002 did not lead to the disintegration of the National Community or the Community Mosque. The Community Mosque continues to function according to the hierarchy of the National

Community, which places al-Amin at the head, grants local mosques financial autonomy, and requires cooperation on nationwide programs such as the Riyaadah and general community orientation. Imam Asim Abdur-Rashid of Philadelphia has served as the acting national Amir in al-Amin's absence. In Atlanta, Amir Ibrahim Abdus-Salam led the community until his death in 2006. Since 2006, Nadim Ali, a licensed practicing therapist and counselor, has served as acting leader of the Atlanta community.

#### OTHER COMMUNITIES AND INSTITUTIONS

Other communities in association with the leadership of W. D. Mohammed include Masjid Muminun, Masjid Qur'an, Masjid Bayyinah, and Masjid al-Shura. One of the earliest of these communities, Masjid Muminun, was established on Hank Aaron Boulevard just east of downtown Atlanta in 1982. Imam Furqan Muhammad, who has led Masjid Muminun since 2003, converted to the Nation of Islam in 1968 and stayed with W. D. Mohammed through the organization's transition to Sunni Islam in the 1970s. A lifelong resident of Georgia, Imam Furqan has been a community leader and prison chaplain for decades. In 2006, he was elected chair of the citywide Majlis al-Shura, a body of Atlanta imams founded in the mid-1980s that coordinates start and stop times for the month of Ramadan, supervises collective Eid Prayers, and issues unified statements to the press when needed. During the same period, Atlanta Muslims collectively purchased a cemetery in Lovejoy, Georgia, just south of the city, where Muslims could be laid to rest according to Islamic teachings.

In the 1970s, Minister LOUIS FARRAKHAN established a new version of the Nation of Islam and sought to recreate Temple No. 15 on Campbellton Road, southwest of Atlanta. This new Temple No. 15 has served as the southern regional headquarters of Farrakhan's Nation of Islam, the national organization. Since then, smartly dressed, bowtied African-American men have often been seen peddling the *Final Call* newspaper. Minister Farrakhan has also regularly visited Atlanta. In October 2007, despite his increasing illness, Farrakhan commemorated the 12th anniversary of the MILLION MAN MARCH with a three-hour-long address to 5,000 at the Atlanta Civic Center.

Atlanta has also been home to Silis X Muhammad's version of the Nation of Islam, another breakaway from the original organization. Along with W. D. Mohammed and Louis Farrakhan, Silis X Muhammad, a former Nation of Islam official, claimed to be the true heir to Elijah Muhammad's legacy. In 1976, he established the Lost Found Nation of Islam and has directed the organization from Atlanta since then. The organization publishes and distributes *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, a newspaper named for the classic weekly of the Nation of Islam.

In 1976–77, Y. M. Hamid, the leader of the Islamic Party of North America (IPNA), moved his organization's headquarters from Washington, D.C., to Conley, Georgia, just 10 miles southeast of the Atlanta city center. Along with him, 14 families made the move, purchasing homes and apartment buildings for the organization's goals, which, like many African-American Muslim platforms, espoused economic self-sufficiency. Hamid may have been attracted to Atlanta since it was largely free of the internecine African-American Muslim feuds of the East Coast during the 1970s. Once headquartered in Atlanta, the organization expanded to the Caribbean islands of Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago. However, this rapid growth and ideological splits led to the IPNA's eventual collapse.

Gwinnet County, northeast of Atlanta, also boasts a significant South-Asian Muslim community and a number of mosques. Al-Madina Masjid was founded in the mid-1980s, just off Jimmy Carter Boulevard and I-85. In 2002, internal leadership disputes splintered the community, and, as a result, some Muslims left the mosque to establish Masjid Abdallah, located just three miles away. Masjid Omar, the Gwinnet satellite of al-Farooq Masjid, is less than a quarter mile from Masjid Omar. The dominant ethnic group of each of these communities is South Asian, and all three are Sunni communities.

In 2000, Sheikh Muhammad ibn Yahya al-Husayni al-Ninowy became the resident imam of al-Madina Masjid. In addition to delivering Friday sermons and leading the Friday prayer, he has led regular *DHIKR* circles, a practice of collective meditative chanting common to various Sufi groups. Trained in the classical system of Islamic learning, Sheikh Ninowy has become one of Atlanta's premier resources for budding religious leaders. Although a permanent resident of Atlanta, he has also traveled abroad to oversee the instruction of his students around the world.

In the 21st century, a group of African-American families formerly associated with the Sankore Institute for Islamic-African Studies of Pittsburgh has begun relocating to Atlanta. The families are formally affiliated with the sultan of Maiurno, Al-Hajj Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad, who is the modern heir of the spiritual, intellectual, and political legacy of Sheikh Usman b. Fodio (d. 1817), the Fulani reformer, activist, and founder of the Sokoto caliphate. The community has focused in part on reconnecting AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS and non-Muslims to their Islamic African heritage through education programs highlighting the living Islamic traditions of the region.

*Azizah* magazine, founded by Tayyibah Taylor in 2001, has become an important Atlanta-based Muslim business. The glossy quarterly features articles on Muslim-American women, fashion, food, religious learning, and other topics of concern to its readership. Since its inception, the magazine has maintained a nonideological and nonsectarian position in its editorial policy. Such prudence has contributed to its

continued success; the magazine now boasts an approximate circulation of 40,000 worldwide.

The Khoja Isma'ili presence in Atlanta is rooted in the general pattern of South Asian immigration to Atlanta. After the immigration reforms of 1965, many Isma'ili Muslims emigrated from East Africa when nationalist leaders in countries such as Uganda and Tanzania persecuted their South-Asian immigrant populations. Moving to Atlanta, among other cities, many of these Isma'ili Muslims remained formally affiliated with the organizational hierarchy of the worldwide Isma'ili community, headed by the AGA KHAN, who visited Atlanta in April 2008. In Atlanta, the community is organized under the His Highness Prince Aga Khan Shi'a Imami Isma'ili Council for the Southeastern United States, which organizes a range of activities and events affiliated with the Aga Khan's global network of charities and community development projects. The Atlanta Isma'ili community is one of the major contributors to the nationwide Partnership Walk, an initiative of the Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A., which to date has been responsible for raising nearly \$30 million for the alleviation of poverty and the promotion of development and educational projects around the world. Established in the early 1990s, the community's main center, or *JAMAATKHANA*, is located in Decatur.

Atlanta also is home to a number of other Shi'a organizations and centers. In 2003, the DAUDI Bohra Isma'ili community established a center in Gwinnet County. Twelver Shi'a communities have been present in Atlanta since the early 1980s. They have been organized by ethnic affiliation. Pakistani Twelvers, for example, established the Zainabia Center in 1997. In 1994, the Sahebozzaman Islamic Center of Atlanta was founded by a small group of Iranians. For much of their history in Atlanta, however, Iranian Shi'a have gathered for the annual mourning rituals of *ASHURA* at a local warehouse owned by Iranian proprietors. More recently, a small march commemorating the death of Husayn has been organized by local Shi'a in downtown Atlanta of the Dar-e Abbas, the Pakistani Twelver community in Lilburn. The Jaffari Center in Decatur is the oldest and most established of the Twelver Shi'a communities.

Al-Fatiha, an online community and international organization dedicated to wrestling with the many controversial issues concerning Islam and homosexuality held its fifth conference and retreat in Atlanta in September 2005. Acclaimed authors and activists Asra Nomani and Amina Wadud provided keynote addresses and led mixed-gender prayer services.

The Istanbul Center for Culture and Dialogue was originally founded in 2002 as the Global Spectrum Foundation and was conceived as a forum through which Atlanta residents could learn about Turkish culture and heritage. Since its founding, it has promoted issues of intercultural and interreligious



dialogue and has been active in the city's interfaith landscape. The group has regularly hosted "dialogue dinners," music and other cultural performances, and panel discussions and lectures, the contents of which have promoted the teachings of Turkish doyen Fethullah Gülen. Bosnian Muslims have also organized centers in Clarkston and Snellville after arriving as refugees from the Balkan wars in the 1990s.

The Islamic Speaker's Bureau (ISB) of Atlanta, formally affiliated with the Islamic Speakers Bureau of Northern California, was established in August 2001 and has since been headed by Soumaya Khalifa. In 2002, the Council of American-Islamic Relations of North Georgia (CAIR) was established.

Abbas Barzegar

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### A Tribe Called Quest

A Tribe Called Quest (ATCQ) is an American hip-hop group from Queens, New York. Founded in 1988, they are best known as pioneers of an "alternative" hip-hop sound, featuring socially conscious and Afrocentric themes. They are also lauded for their musical fusion of jazz, soul, hip-hop, and rhymes, which emphasize artistry, lyricism, and subtlety over the machismo, misogyny, and swagger of the hardcore and gangsta rap styles prevalent in the early 1990s. Founding members Q-Tip (born Jonathan Davis), Phife Dawg (Malik Taylor), Ali Shaheed Muhammad, and Jarobi White (who left after the group's first album) met in high school in Queens, where they were given their name by fellow hip-hop trailblazers The Jungle Brothers, who attended the same high school, and then subsequently began performing together live. The group's creative, laid-back style and Q-Tip's distinctive vocals quickly garnered the group attention from record labels. They signed their first recording contract with Jive Records in 1989.

ATCQ went on to record five albums: *People's Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm* (1990), *The Low End Theory* (1991), *Midnight Marauders* (1993), *Beats, Rhymes, and Life* (1996), and *The Love Movement* (1999). While all their albums have generally been well received, many critics consider *The Low End Theory* one of the greatest hip-hop albums of all time, praising the lively wordplay between Q-Tip and Phife, its eclectic sampling of jazz records, and the incorporation

of live jazz instrumentation, including a contribution from renowned upright jazz bassist Ron Carter. Critics also hailed the topical subject matter featured on its various tracks, such as date rape ("The Infamous Date Rape"), the hypocrisy of the music industry ("Show Business," "Rap Promoter"), and consumerism ("Skypager"). The group officially disbanded in 1999, citing differences with their record label as the central factor behind their split. ATCQ reunited in 2006 for a series of concerts in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, though they did not announce any plans for further recording. Q-Tip, Phife Dawg, and Muhammad have all gone on to record solo albums.

Two of the group's members, rapper Q-Tip and DJ/producer Ali Shaheed Muhammad, are practicing Sunni Muslims. Brought up in a Christian household, Q-Tip began studying Islam in the early 1990s, officially becoming Muslim in 1995 and subsequently changing his name to Kamaal Ibn John Fareed. While born to a Muslim father, Muhammad did not begin actively practicing Islam until the mid-1990s as well. Their spiritual conversions were reflected in the ATCQ albums recorded after 1995. For example, on *Beats, Rhymes, and Life*, Q-Tip raps that "sometimes Shaytan [Satan] got me by the pressure points" and asks "Allah forgive me." Q-Tip and Muhammad have said in interviews that the emphasis on love in their final album was grounded in their commitment to Islam. In addition, Q-Tip and Muhammad, along with friend and producer the late Jaydee, formed a production company in 1995 named The Ummah, after the Arabic term for the global Muslim community. In a 1998 interview with *Interview* magazine, Muhammad explained the relationship between Islam and their music: "Islam governs everything we do. We're not making Islamic music, but we are able to be conscious and sensitive about what's going on."

Sylvia Chan-Malik

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### autobiography

The word *autobiography* arose in the 19th century when the public depiction of the private "self"—in other words, of one's individuality—became popular as a literary genre.

The basic framework of the autobiography is a chronological story in which the author narrates the circumstances of his or her personal development and maturation. The genre of autobiography in U.S. history has played a crucial role in defining the American self as subject, charting its spiritual, intellectual, and political development from the subject's personal perspective. As first-person narratives in American history continue to receive scholarly attention, autobiographies of Muslim Americans from the era of slavery to the present have come to be seen by scholars and Muslims alike as crucial part of America's shared past. The personal accounts of Muslim Americans have often reflected and responded to the dominant ideologies of the times.

#### NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

The autobiographies of African Muslims in the slavery era often reflected the roots of African Muslims and how they developed their identities in new surroundings. Autobiographical accounts allowed slaves to assert control over their destiny by affirming their spirituality, assessing their captors, and showcasing their erudition. The only known slave memoir written in ARABIC by a slave in North Carolina was that of OMAR IBN SAID (1770–1864), who wrote a 15-page manuscript in 1831 about his captivity and life as a slave.

Whereas Said's memoir offered a rare view of life for AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES, a memoir written in 1873 by NICHOLAS SAID (no relation to Omar ibn Said), also known as Mohammed Ali ben Said (1836–82), described life for a Muslim freedman during Reconstruction. Formerly known as Mohammed Ali ben Said, Nicholas Said was an extraordinary educated African slave who penned an epic autobiography, the longest narrative by an enslaved African-American Muslim. Said's account is 224 pages long, and he recounts travels across five continents and countless adventures that above anything serve to highlight the level of erudition, civilization, and resolve of members of the global black diaspora.

In the late 19th century, the first prominent white convert to Islam recorded his conversion account. In his autobiography, ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB (1846–1916) sought to provide a map to spiritual fulfillment and certitude and attempted to engage religious liberals and open-minded thinkers in an effort to propagate Islam on American soil. Webb's *Islam in America* (1893) was an attempt to normalize Islam as part of America's spiritual patchwork as well as the free white man's experience of a religion seen as foreign and exotic. Part autobiographical and part didactic, the book reveals how much Webb was a product of his times; his spiritual experiences were part and parcel of American history. Webb also shared his personal conversion story and defense of Islam as rational, modern, pro-woman, and peaceful at the COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893 in CHICAGO.

ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS who immigrated to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries recorded their experiences in letters back home and in ARABIC newspapers such as *al-Bayan*, which was run by members of the DRUZE COMMUNITY. In addition, Syrian immigrants in NORTH DAKOTA and other states shared their life stories in oral history interviews recorded by the WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION, remembering in the 1930s the place of their upbringing in the Middle East and their lives as farmers, peddlers, store owners, and soldiers in the early 20th-century United States.

#### FROM THE TWENTIETH TO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES

With little doubt, the most famous and significant Muslim-American autobiography in U.S. history is that of MALCOLM X (1925–65), whose powerful personal account inspired the growth of Sunni Islam and black Muslim liberation movements in the United States. While some previous autobiographical narratives of Muslim Americans aimed to introduce Islam to a predominantly white Christian society, Malcolm's memoir used Islam and the author's new identity as a Muslim American to combat racism. Cowritten by Alex Haley and published after Malcolm's assassination in 1965, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* described how, from the time of his childhood in the Midwest, Malcolm X suffered from the material and psychological effects of racism, descended into what he described as a life of petty crime and self-hatred, and found a way out of his old life by converting to Islam in prison.

After joining the NATION OF ISLAM in the late 1940s and becoming one of the group's prominent leaders, Malcolm wrote he later came to embrace the universal appeal of Islam to people of all races during a 1964 pilgrimage to Mecca. One of the key moments of personal development described in his autobiography, the embrace of Islam's universal appeal on the hajj was juxtaposed with Malcolm's uncompromising criticism of American racism and white imperialism. After his assassination, the book became a manifesto of the Black Power movement and anticolonial resistance movements around the world, and in the 1970s, it emerged as a popular text of religious Muslims who admired Malcolm X's embrace of Sunni Islam.

Malcolm's autobiography was the first of many conversion stories to be published in the second half of the 20th century. As the number of converts to Sunni Islam increased in the 1970s and 1980s, so did the number of autobiographies that explained the details of people's conversion experiences. In *Giant Steps* (1983), basketball player, KAREEM ABDUL-JABBAR (1947– ), detailed his conversion to Islam in 1968 during the summer of his junior year at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the role that his

religious life played in sustaining him during his sometimes unhappy but very successful years playing for the Milwaukee Bucks and the Los Angeles Lakers. Other famous African-American Muslim sports figures recorded their experiences as Muslim Americans as well, including boxer MUHAMMAD ALI (1942– ) and Ahmad Rashad, a wide receiver in the NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE who converted to Islam in 1972.

In addition to the autobiographies of Muslim converts, the memoirs of Muslim-American immigrants and their children began to proliferate in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Not all of these autobiographies were religious in nature. In *What I'd Say* (2001), AHMET ERTEGUN (1923–2006) described his role as cofounder of Atlantic Records and his part in shaping the history of JAZZ, popular, and rock MUSIC in the second half of the 20th century. *Voyage through Time* (2002) recounts the rise of AHMED HASAN ZEWAİL (1946– ), who grew up in humble circumstances in Egypt, became a professor at the California Institute of Technology, and in 1999 won a Nobel Prize in chemistry.

Some notable immigrant autobiographies have been written by Muslim-American women seeking to confront the oppressive and misogynistic stereotypes of the Muslim cultures of their births. Leila Ahmed's memoir, *A Border Passage* (1999), chronicles the journey of a feminist who grew up amidst a rich tradition of women's RELIGIOUS LIFE in Egypt, was educated in England, and became a pioneer in women's studies in the United States. Iranian-American Fatemeh Keshavarz in *Jasmine and Stars* (2007) recalls her upbringing in Shiraz, the role of male relatives in encouraging her life as a poet, and the ways in which women's literary culture survived and prospered even after the Iranian revolution in 1979.

The children of Muslim immigrants also produced a number of autobiographies in this period, often describing their attempts to practice a form of Islamic religious life that responded to their needs as Americans and rescued Islam from what they described as its abuse at the hands of extremists. In a series of semiautobiographical books, including *American Muslims* (2000), Asma Gull Hasan presented a sometimes innocent but always enthusiastic view of the complementary nature of American and Islamic ideals. Journalist Asra Q. Nomani wrote in *Standing Alone in Mecca* (2005) about how her pilgrimage to Mecca as a single, unwed mother helped her to connect with the deep well of women's dignity in Islamic history and inspired her to struggle for women's rights among Muslim-American communities. In *Acts of Faith* (2007), Eboo Patel chronicled the series of events that led him to found the Interfaith Youth Corps, an organization in Chicago that has joined efforts to build an international interfaith youth movement.

The proliferation of Muslim-American autobiographies in the 21st century testifies to the changing position

of Muslim Americans in U.S. society. A commodity that could be sold in the marketplace, the genre was a sign of the increasingly important symbolic role played by Muslim-American men and women in POLITICS as well. No longer rare, Muslim-American autobiographies express a diversity of Muslim-American experiences and backgrounds.

Marwa Awad and Edward E. Curtis IV

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## Azizah

Founded in 2001, *Azizah* (which means “dear one” or “cherished one”) is a quarterly Muslim women’s magazine whose niche market has consisted primarily of Muslim-American women. Its circulation grew from 5,000 in 2003 to around 45,000 in 2009. Tayyibah Taylor, the magazine’s founder, publisher, and editor in chief, is a Muslim woman of Caribbean descent who has lived in Canada, Saudi Arabia, and the United States. The absence of positive images of Muslim women in the American media inspired Taylor to create the magazine. Modeling her magazine on the success of black-owned magazines such as *Ebony* and *Jet*, Taylor set out to create a vehicle through which Muslim-American women could present their own images and voices.

Several regular features have differentiated *Azizah* from other English-language women’s magazines in the United States. While adopting the glossy feel and chic look of *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue*, its covers have featured models wearing a *HIJAB*, or “head scarf.” In addition to distinguishing *Azizah* as a Muslim magazine, its smiling *hijabi* cover models, who are depicted in colorful outfits and makeup, have also countered the often gloomy, humorless portraits of Muslim women reproduced in mainstream American media. *Azizah* has taken the same symbol—a covered Muslim woman—but has associated it with joy, beauty, and style.

The contents of the magazine have reflected a similar approach, playfully adopting the standard features of a women’s magazine but interpreting them in light of Muslim-American women’s experiences. While the models are beautiful, they are also the subject of cover stories that depict them as professionally successful and socially concerned. Female Muslims provide the magazine’s stories on a variety of topics, including travel, DRESS, and FOOD. Each issue has also included a feature called “Deen,” or “religion,” focusing on an aspect of Islamic belief or practice.

While *Azizah* has welcomed a variety of Islamic viewpoints in its pages, writers have generally presented a modern, liberal-leaning vision of the faith. Writers refer to Islamic texts and *SHARI‘A*, or Islamic “law and ethics,” in shedding light on issues facing the “modern Muslim woman,” including HIV/AIDS, DIVORCE, and business networking, from an Islamic perspective. The magazine also offers its readers a regular feature called “Shahadah,” or “witness,” which recounts the conversion stories of Muslim

women, and “Book Club,” which reviews books written by or about Muslim women.

Throughout its history, the magazine has highlighted the achievements of Muslim-American women, from the election of Sheila Abdus-Salam to the New York State Supreme Court to the stories of Muslim women making their marks as firefighters, human rights lawyers, mountain climbers, playwrights, film directors, and mothers. At the same time, the magazine has demonstrated how Muslim-American women’s aspirations and experiences overlap with those of non-Muslim-American women by addressing topics, such as how to be environmentally responsible or prepare healthy, low-fat dinners, that one would be just as likely to find in non-Muslim women’s magazines.

*Azizah* has consciously attempted to bridge the social, ethnic, generational, and religious differences of its female Muslim readers. White, black, and brown models have appeared on the cover, and the staff has included, in addition to the African-American publisher, Indonesian-American creative director Marlina Soerakoesoemah and writers from nearly every national and ethnic background. The multiethnic nature of *Azizah* has distinguished it from most other Muslim-American publications that tend to cater to one ethnic or racial group. Though the magazine is focused on Muslim-American women’s concerns, it has included a “Global Voices” department that highlights the noteworthy work and impact of Muslim women in their communities abroad.

*Azizah* has also fashioned a community outside its pages. Beyond the fine print and glossy photos, the editors, writers, and subscribers of *Azizah* have formed a network of Muslim-American women who have influenced and supported one another. While most magazines cater to a vast market of unconnected people, *Azizah* has galvanized a community that attends Muslim women’s conferences, Qur’anic study circles, fashion shows, and parties. This informal network has also participated in “Celebrations,” receptions held in cities across the United States in which subscribers have the opportunity to meet with the publisher, Tayyibah Taylor, and other writers. As a result, when women purchase a copy of *Azizah*, they discover the pictures and stories of women that they have already met in real life.

Jamillah Karim

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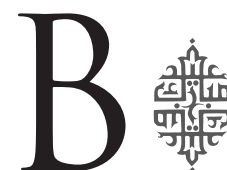
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Founded in 2001, *Azizah* magazine combines items typically found in women's magazines—features on fashion, women's accomplishments, and personal health—with articles about religious life. (*Newscom*)



**Barbary pirates** See UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS.

**Baquaqua, Mahommah Gardo** (ca. 1830–?)  
*freedman and world traveler*

Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua is the coauthor of the *Biography of Mahommah G. Baquaqua, a Native of Zoogoo, in the Interior of Africa*, one of the few surviving narratives of individuals who were enslaved in Africa, survived the Middle Passage, and recorded their lives in the Americas as literary texts. Published in 1854, it is also one of the earliest biographies of a Muslim-born American. What is even more striking is the degree of autonomy that Baquaqua exerted in obtaining his freedom and recording his story. Baquaqua was never manumitted by a slave owner, nor was his narrative published by abolitionists. Rather, Baquaqua made his own way in both life and letters. Although he did not appear to be a fervent adherent of any religious faith, Baquaqua's Muslim identity became more important—to himself and others—through missionaries' efforts to convert him to Christianity and through his own attempts to return to Africa.

Baquaqua was born in the West African town of Zoogoo (now Djougou, Benin) around 1830, though his exact birthdate is not known. His unusual name reflects his parents' devotion to the prophet Muhammad, a West African term for a child that follows twins (sometimes rendered "Gado"), and a (perhaps distorted) indication of his ethnicity or place of origin, denoted by the common prefix *Ba* (or "from"). As a boy, Baquaqua was sent to school to become a Muslim cleric, but he disliked the strict instruction and ran away repeatedly. He subsequently trained as a craftsman, perhaps in his early teens, and produced needles, knives, jewelry, tools, and farming implements. After becoming a servant for the king of Bergoo (in what is now northern Benin), Baquaqua was sold to European slave traders, changing hands between several African masters before he was finally placed in a slave ship bound for Pernambuco, Brazil. Baquaqua later described the Middle Passage as a state of prolonged "suffering and fatigue" surrounded by "loathsomeness and filth."

After arriving in Brazil sometime between 1843 and 1845, Baquaqua was purchased by a Roman Catholic baker of Portuguese descent. The baker was a harsh master who beat Baquaqua whenever he was unable to sell his loaves and who enforced piety during Catholic services with a whip for any slaves who fell asleep. When Baquaqua unsuccessfully attempted to drown himself, the baker sold him to a slave dealer, and he served a series of cruel masters before being purchased by the captain of a vessel called the *Lembrança* (Portuguese for "memory"). Onboard the small ship, he quickly became the steward, but the captain's mistress often caused trouble for him, resulting in periodic whippings. However, on other occasions, she saved him from punishment. "She was a strange compound of humanity and brutality," Baquaqua recalled. The captain apparently possessed even more brutality and less humanity, as he subjected Baquaqua to horrific physical abuse, including a beating by three men during which he was tied to a canon and pummeled with sticks, leaving him incapacitated for several days.

When the ship landed in New York in 1847, Baquaqua, then around 17 years old, and his fellow slaves understood that they had arrived in a "land of freedom," and they attempted to escape. Unable to speak any English besides the word *F-r-e-e*, they were soon detained, but the New York authorities did not release them back to their former master, and one night "some friends," apparently abolitionists, managed to open the prison doors and transport him to Boston. However, his welcome was temporary, and when given the choice of proceeding to Haiti or England, Baquaqua chose Haiti.

Taking up residence in Haiti later in 1847, Baquaqua reported, "I felt myself free" among the "people of color who dwell there." However, he did not understand their French and Creole languages, and he had no means of supporting himself financially. After a period of extreme poverty, during which he became so hungry that his head became "dizzy from the weakness of my system," Baquaqua was rescued by a Christian minister, Reverend William Judd, and his wife, Nancy, who ran the Baptist Free Mission in Port-au-Prince. Baquaqua eventually chose to convert to Christianity, and

after he stayed in the Judds' mission for two years, they financed his return trip to the United States so that he could attend Central College in McGrawville, New York, from 1850 to 1853.

Like his conversion, Baquaqua's commitment to academic advancement has been questioned by some scholars. However, a poem that he composed and recited at a graduation ceremony of sorts reflects a composite of Baquaqua's genuine and political motives:

Oh! Africa, my native land,  
When shall I see thee, meekly stand,  
Beneath the banner of my God,  
And governed by His Holy word?

While the rest of the poem addresses racial difference and Baquaqua's desire to see oppressed Africans enjoying liberty, these lines stand out for several reasons. The exclamation *Oh!* suggests heightened feeling and adds emphasis to the message that follows. The phrases *my God* and *His Holy word* can be understood as Christian references, but they are not explicitly so. Moreover, the unnecessary comma in the line *When shall I see thee, meekly stand* suggests a double meaning: Not only did Baquaqua wish to see his native land "meekly stand / Beneath the banner of my God," he also simply wished to see his native land. It is impossible to know what motivated Baquaqua to convert to Christianity or to understand the complexities of his personal faith, but his own words make it clear that he was desperate to return to his African homeland. The Christian ministry seemed to offer him a way to get there. As Judd himself noted, Baquaqua "talk[ed] much of Africa" and dreamed of returning to see his mother again.

Unfortunately, the trip home was not so simple as his passage to the Americas. From New York, Baquaqua moved to Canada, where he wrote his *Biography*, with significant assistance from Samuel Moore, an Irish immigrant and fellow abolitionist. The *Biography* is a fascinating text, beginning with Moore's third-person narration and then moving toward an increasingly uninterrupted first-person narration, which seems to represent Baquaqua's own words.

One of the surprising oddities of the book, however, is that Moore did not relate Baquaqua's conversion in either Baquaqua's words or his own. Rather, in the pivotal moment of this narrative, Moore inserted two extended quotations from external sources, one from a book about Baptist churches and the other from an article by William Judd. Did Moore suspect that Baquaqua's motives were mixed? For whatever reason, he seems to have deemed it necessary to present some authoritative, "outside" sources to authenticate Baquaqua's faithful vision.

After the book was published in 1854, Baquaqua, then about 24 years old, sailed to Liverpool, England, in the hopes

that the Christian community there would fund the rest of his passage back to Africa. His hopes were not immediately answered. In 1857, Baquaqua contacted the American Free Baptist Mission Society again to see if they might help pay for his voyage. They did not fulfill his request, however, and after 1857, he disappears from the historical record. It is unknown if Baquaqua ever returned home to Africa, what became of him, or when he died.

Baquaqua's most important legacy is his *Biography*, one of the very few records written in English of life in Zoogoo and Bergoo, enslavement in Africa, the Middle Passage to the Americas, and the extraordinary measures to which some slaves resorted to procure their freedom. The textual depiction of Baquaqua as a convert and aspiring missionary demonstrates the potential of religious conversion to provide enslaved Muslims a voice in the dominant Anglo-American cultures of the 19th century as well as a potential means of returning home.

Patrick E. Horn

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### Mahommah Baquaqua Escapes in New York (1854)

*World traveler Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua (ca. 1830–?) arrived in the United States from Brazil in 1847. Still a slave, he escaped while his ship was docked in New York City, and, with the help of abolitionists, this Portuguese-speaking foreigner made his way to Boston. From there, he moved first to Haiti and then in 1850 to McGrawville, New York, where he attended Central College. In 1854, Baquaqua moved to Canada, where he wrote his memoirs with the assistance of Samuel Moore, an abolitionist. In 1857, he traveled to England, hoping that he could return home to Africa*

*from there. Whether he made it to Africa and what happened to him after that are both unknown, but his place in U.S. history is secured by the autobiography that he wrote while still in North America. This rare autobiographical account captures the remarkable transatlantic crossings of a man who was once a Muslim and a slave. In the excerpt below, Baquaqua describes what he calls the happiest moment of his life—the moment when, still onboard the ship traveling to New York, he anticipates becoming free.*



We all had learned, that at New York there was no slavery; that it was a free country and that if we once got there we had nothing to dread from our cruel slave masters, and we were all most anxious to get there.

Previous to the time of the ship's sailing, we were informed that we were going to a land of freedom. I said then you will never see me any more after I once get there. I was overjoyed at the idea of going to a free country, and a ray of hope dawned upon me, that the day was not far distant when I should be a free man. Indeed I felt myself already free! How beautifully the sun shone on that eventful morning, the morning of our departure for that land of freedom we had heard so much about. The winds too were favorable, and soon the canvass spread before the exhilarating breeze, and our ship stood for that happy land. The duties of office, on that voyage, appeared light to me indeed, in anticipation of seeing the goodly land, and nothing at all appeared a trouble to me. I obeyed all orders cheerfully and with alacrity.

That was that the happiest time in my life, even now my heart thrills with joyous delight when I think of that voyage, and believe that the God of all mercies ordered all for my good; how thankful was I. . . .

The first words of English that my two companions and myself ever learned was F-r-e-e; we were taught it by an Englishman on board, and oh! How many times did I repeat it, over and over again. This same man told me a great deal about New York City—he could speak Portuguese. He told me how the colored people in New York were all free, and it made me feel very happy, and I longed for the day to come when I should be there. The day at length came, but it was not an easy matter for two boys and a girl, who could only speak one word of English, to make their escape, having, as we supposed, no friends to aid us. But God was

our friend, as it proved in the end, and raised up for us many friends in a strange land.

The pilot who came aboard of our vessel treated us very kindly—he appeared different to any person I had ever seen before, and we took courage from that little circumstance. The next day a great many colored persons came aboard the vessel, who inquired whether we were free. The captain had previously told us not to say that we were slaves, but we heeded not his wish, and he, seeing so many persons coming aboard, began to entertain fears that his property would take in their heads to lift their heels and run away, so he very prudently informed us that New York was no place for us to go about in—that it was a very bad place, and as sure as the people caught us they would kill us. But when we were alone we concluded that we would take the first opportunity and the chance, how we would fare in a free country.

One day when I had helped myself rather freely to wine, I was imprudent enough to say I would not stay aboard any longer; that I would be free. The captain hearing it, called me down below, and he and three others endeavored to confine me, but could not do so; but they ultimately succeeded in confining me in a room in the bow of the vessel. I was there in confinement several days. The man who brought my food would knock at the door, and if I told him to come in he would do so, otherwise he would pass along, and I got no food.

I told him on one occasion that I would not remain confined there another day with my life; that out I would get; and there being some pieces of iron in the room, towards night I took hold of one of them—it was a bar, about two feet long—with that I broke open the door, and walked out. The men were all busy at work, and the captain's wife was standing on the deck when I ascended from my prison. I heard them asking one another who had let me out; but no one could tell. I bowed to the captain's wife, and passed on to the side of the ship. There was a plank from the ship to the shore. I walked across it and ran as if for my life, of course not knowing whither I was going.

I was observed during my flight by a watchman who was rather lame, and he undertook to stop me, but I shook him off, and passed on until I got to a store, at the door of which I halted a moment to take breath. They inquired of me what was the matter, but I could not tell them, as I knew nothing



of English but the word F-r-e-e. Soon after, the lame watchman and another came up to me. One of them drew a bright star from his pocket and showed it to me, but I could make nothing of it. I was then taken to the watch-house and locked up all night, when the captain called next morning, paid expenses, and took me back again to the ship along with him.

The officers told me I should be a free man, if I chose, but I did not know how to act; so after a little persuasion, the captain induced me to go back with him, as I need not be afraid. This was on a Saturday, and on the following Monday afternoon three carriages drove up and stopped near the vessel. Some gentlemen came aboard from them, and walked about the deck, talking to the captain, telling him that all on board were free, and requesting him to hoist the flag. He blushed a good deal, and said he would not do so; he put himself in a great rage and stormed somewhat considerably.

We were afterwards taken in their carriages, accompanied by the captain, to a very handsome building with a splendid portico in front, the entrance to which was ascended by a flight of marble steps, and was surrounded by a neat iron railing having gates at different points, the enclosure being ornamented with trees and shrubs of various kinds; it appeared to me a most beautiful place, as I had never seen anything like it before. I afterwards learned that this building was the City Hall of New York.



Source: Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua and Samuel Moore. *Biography of Mahommah G. Baquaqua*. Detroit: Geo. E. Pomeroy & Co., Tribune Office, 1854, pp. 51–52, 54–56.

### **Baraka, Amiri (1934– ) poet, playwright, essayist**

The former leader of the “Black Arts” movement, African-American poet and playwright Amiri Baraka has been a singular and prolific African-American writer and political leader. Maintaining complicated relationships with Islamic tradition and the Muslim world, Baraka became controversial for his criticism of President George W. Bush’s explanations of the attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. Politically minded and engaged, Baraka’s legacy is one of an uncompromising African-American artist.

Amiri Baraka was born LeRoi Jones in NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, at Kinney Hospital on October 7, 1934. His parents

were part of the black middle class. His father, Coyt LeRoy Jones, was a U.S. postal employee, while his mother, Anna Lois Jones, was a social worker. As a child, Jones attended public schools in Newark and then Rutgers University and Howard University, dropping out just before his graduation. He served in the U.S. Air Force and then moved to Greenwich Village in NEW YORK CITY, where he worked in a jazz record store, studied poetry with Allen Ginsberg, and followed the jazz performance poetry of Langston Hughes. At the jazz store Baraka met and married Hettie Cohen in 1958 and had two children.

Together, Hettie and Baraka edited avant-garde poetry journals, and their home became a magnet for artists, musicians, and writers during the early 1960s, as reflected in a 1964 *New York Herald Tribune* article that dubbed Baraka the “King of the East Village.” Heavily influenced by beatniks such as Ginsberg, Baraka achieved some early success as a playwright. *The Toilet* and *The Baptism* were performed in New York in 1961 and 1964, respectively.

By 1964, however, Baraka began to move away from Greenwich Village and toward Harlem, where he became a leading figure in the “Black Arts” movement, which tied African-American arts to the struggle for black freedom and self-determination. During this period, he wrote *The Dutchman* (1964), a play that won an Obie award. His work also bore the influences of Harlemite MALCOLM X (1925–65). After Malcolm’s assassination in 1965, Baraka left his wife and children in Greenwich Village and moved to Harlem, where he established a new home in a brownstone that became the headquarters for the Black Arts Repertory Theater-School (BARTS). Hajj Hisham Jaaber, a former spiritual adviser to Malcolm, gave LeRoi Jones an Arabic name, *Ameer Barakat*. Subsequently, another political and spiritual advisor, Maulana Karenga, gave Ameer Barakat a Swahili equivalent, *Amiri Baraka*.

Though it is not clear to what extent Baraka was ever a practicing Muslim, his artistry and politics were profoundly shaped by Muslim-American traditions and figures in this period. His 1966 play, *Black Mass*, centered on the NATION OF ISLAM story of Yacub’s invention of the “white devil.” In 1966, Baraka left Harlem to establish the Black Arts movement in Newark, New Jersey. He founded the Spirit House, which was at first a cultural, spiritual, and religious center where Baraka received Islamic instruction. Then he established an independent publishing company, Jihad (“Struggle”). A Muslim man, Kamel Waddud, introduced himself to Baraka insisting that he had been sent to convert him to Sunni Islam. As Baraka explains, Waddud and Jaaber began teaching him “the five pillars of the Islamic faith, and . . . how to make Salat (prayer).” Further, Baraka explains that “at one point, the Spirit House even became, unofficially, a jamaat, or gathering place for the faithful. There were classes in Arabic offered and religious

instruction.” Despite all of this interest in Islam and Muslims, when Baraka and his second wife, who took the name Amina Baraka, were married in August 1967, a Yoruba ceremony was conducted by the Yoruba priest Nana Oserjeman.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Amiri Baraka remained a central figure, if not the central figure, in the politically inspired black arts, publishing poetry, prose, and plays with titles such as *Black Magic Poetry* (1969), *Four Black Revolutionary Plays* (1969), and *It's Nation Time* (1970). However, throughout the 1970s, much of Baraka's work shifted its focus from the black power movement to Marxism-Leninism, and Baraka criticized all religions, including Islam. He continued to write prolifically, amassing an impressive body of work that included dozens of plays, fiction pieces, and numerous collections of poetry and creative nonfiction essays.

In 1979, Baraka taught at the State University of New York—Stony Brook and then took a post at Rutgers University in 1984. Throughout the 1990s, he continued to write, though at a slower pace than before. In August 2001, New Jersey governor James McGreevey named him the state poet laureate, honoring the profound contributions that Baraka had made to American literature.

Shortly after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Baraka published a long, apocalyptic poem entitled “Somebody Blew Up America.” In addition to its criticism of American racism—and the roles of figures such as Supreme Court justice Clarence Thomas and then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice in perpetuating it—the poem implicated Israelis and specifically Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon in the attacks. Accused of anti-Semitism by the (Jewish-American) Anti-Defamation League, Baraka called his position “Anti-Zionism,” meaning that he was opposed to the presence of a Jewish national home in Palestine, not the Jewish people. Governor McGreevey asked Baraka to resign his post, and Baraka refused. The New Jersey state legislature then eliminated the poet laureate position.

In the first decade of the 21st century, much of Baraka's attention turned toward film. Having starred in Warren Beatty's *Bulworth* (1998), Baraka went on to appear as himself in 18 documentaries and films, often focusing on the African-American experience. Although Baraka maintained his intellectual and political interest in Islam, he also insisted that he was a communist and an atheist and has denied that he was ever a Muslim.

Komozi Woodard

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### Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship

The Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship is a Sufi group named after its Sri Lankan founder, Muhammed Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen. The fellowship was founded in 1971 in the Overbrook residential section of Philadelphia after the Tamil mystic agreed to come to the United States. The Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship in the United States has emphasized the importance of love, patience, tolerance, wisdom, and human unity through the mystical and spiritual aspects of Sufi Islam.

Not much is known about Muhaiyaddeen's early life, and the earliest records associated with him date to the 1930s, when pilgrims discovered the wandering mystic in the jungles of Sri Lanka. The pilgrims, inspired by his wisdom, invited him to a nearby village where Muhaiyaddeen began his public life of teaching after three more years of being a wandering ascetic. Focusing on qualities such as justice, charity, and wisdom, Muhaiyaddeen used stories in his teachings to captivate his audience. His followers included both Hindus and Muslims, and Muhaiyaddeen insisted that there should be no distinction between religions or other divisive characteristics such as race or color. Muslims who were trained in *SUFISM*, the mystical branch of Islam, began to identify Muhaiyaddeen with the *quths*, or “highly gifted spiritual teachers.” In 1967, the Serendib Study Group was established in Colombo, then the capital of Sri Lanka, in order to study Muhaiyaddeen's discourses. The group still meets today.

In October 1971, Muhaiyaddeen accepted an invitation to visit the United States and began teaching in Philadelphia, although his role was more counselor than spiritual leader. Although Muhaiyaddeen recommended small phrases to help members “remember God,” it was not until five years later that Muhaiyaddeen began associating his teachings with the Sufi path of Islam. In 1976, Muhaiyaddeen began teaching his followers a more formal practice of *DHIKR*, the rituals by which Sufi Muslims praise God, although he taught them a relatively silent, introspective style of contemplation rather than that performed by some other Sufi groups. Muhaiyaddeen traveled back and forth to Sri Lanka. Earlier, in 1974, he began hosting discussions on various types of *dhikr* and taught the *salat*, the prescribed prayers in Arabic performed in the direction of Mecca. Eventually, he began to lead a more formal externalized form of *dhikr* known as the loud *dhikr*, in the early morning.

In 1981, Muhaiyaddeen formally initiated the *salat* prayers and a year later began discussions on building a mosque for the community. During the 15 years of traveling between the United States and Sri Lanka, Muhaiyaddeen recorded many hours of audio and video lectures. His most popular book of lectures was perhaps *Islam and World Peace: Explanations of a Sufi* (1987), in which Muhaiyaddeen insisted

that Islam is a religion of peace and advocated religious pluralism and tolerance, a message that brought Muhaiyaddeen to the attention of both Muslim and non-Muslim journalists. Muhaiyaddeen died on December 8, 1986, and is buried at a tomb (*mazar*) in Coatesville, Pennsylvania, 40 miles from Philadelphia, where pilgrims from around the world visit to pay their respects.

By the 21st century, the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship retained the mystical aspect of Sufism while still adhering to the tenets of Sunni Islam. Daily prayers were scheduled five times and the Friday congregational prayers were observed. Classes were held on the Qur'an and Arabic, and there were established life cycle rituals for community members. During the month of Ramadan, community members gathered nightly to offer extra prayers and break the fast with vegetarian dishes such as curry and kanji.

In a departure from the tradition of separating men and women in the public performance of the *salat*—but in line with many Sufi paths—the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Foundation has not enforced gender segregation during prayers. Although women have been encouraged to be chaste and modest, Muhaiyaddeen believed that modesty was a state of spirituality to be practiced by both genders. Muhaiyaddeen also picked women for leadership positions within the community, a practice that continued after his death. Some women have served as branch presidents, while other women have served on the mosque committees. In addition, women have led the weekly prayer meetings and offered their interpretations and insights on Muhaiyaddeen's teachings.

Specific spiritual teachings of Muhaiyaddeen included the classic Sufi goal of “losing oneself” in the oneness of God, but he also emphasized that it is an individual's responsibility to recreate the qualities of God, such as compassion and patience within oneself. To achieve this, certain conditions must be met, including the constant reaffirmation that nothing but God exists, the constant elimination of evil from one's life, a conscious effort to create qualities of patience and tolerance within oneself, and the assumption that all lives were created equal by God and one should treat others as one would treat oneself. According to Muhaiyaddeen's teachings, *dhikr* is the primary way of achieving these goals and coming closer to the realization of God.

As Muhaiyaddeen's audiences consisted of mixed races, genders, and backgrounds, he urged his followers to love one another and overcome violence and egotism. Muhaiyaddeen also taught that the true birthright of human beings was to live as “real human beings” (*insan al-kamil*) and to be purified in this life by understanding the virtues and qualities of God. Muhaiyaddeen believed that ethical behavior meant that one was aware that God is always watching humankind's actions and thoughts.

In 2008, there were nine branches located throughout the United States that offered weekly fellowship and Sufi study circle meetings. Three other branches in the United States and other branches located worldwide have held monthly meetings. The movement leader was Muhammad Abdur Razzaq, who succeeded Bawa Muhaiyaddeen in 1986. The last census of followers, taken in 1994, placed membership around 1,000 in the United States and 3,000 members worldwide. Although there may have been a slight decrease in the numbers following Muhaiyaddeen's death, there has been increased interaction between the fellowship and the larger Islamic community as others seek to understand the goals and accomplishments of the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship.

Natalia Slain

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### Bektashi Sufi Order

Bektashi Sufis practice a form of SUFISM that was founded in the 13th century by Haji Bektash in central Anatolia that later spread to the Balkans. Bektashi Sufism stresses the importance of spirituality based on logic and reason, and Bektashis have taught that the use of religious rituals is meaningless unless one has the aspiration to enrich one's own life. Bektashis are not known for public performance of rituals, unlike the whirling of the MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER or the musical performance of the CHISHTI SUFI ORDER.

According to Bektashi traditions, Bektashis may only come to have a relationship with God through devotion and obedience to their personal teacher, or *murshid*. Bektashis have often worn ceremonial garb consisting of the *taj* (head covering), the *khirqah* (robe), and the *kemer* (girdle). Students of Bektashism strive to achieve the highest moral standards along a difficult path of seven phases and form a close bond with their *murshids*. The Bektashi Order has earned a reputation for respecting religious diversity and secular laws in addition to allowing women to participate along with men.

The Bektashis are also known for the beauty of their spiritual poetry known as *nefes* and perform spiritual rituals

praising God through the recitation of poetry, often in the Turkish language. Unlike most other forms of Islam and Sufism, Bektashism has a celibate branch and a noncelibate branch, and the celibate form of religious life has been highly regarded since the 1500s, when the Bektashi Order was restructured by Balim Sultan (?–1516). The leadership positions of the Bektashi Order include dede baba (the top position), halife (regional head), baba (head of a *tekke*, or “lodge”), and dervish (monk).

The Bektashi Order was brought to the United States in 1953 or 1954 by an Albanian Muslim refugee known as Baba Rexheb (1901–95). Although Bektashi Sufism had been in Albania since the 15th century and began flourishing in the 19th century, communist leaders saw Bektashism and other religious institutions as enemies of the state, and as a result religious leaders fled the country. The first Albanian-American *tekke* was established by Baba Rexheb in 1954 in Taylor, Michigan, just southwest of Detroit, and the lodge conducted daily prayers, initiation ceremonies, and *DHIKR* while also attempting to perpetuate ethnic Albanian traditions.

The constitution of that *tekke* requires the baba to be of “the Albanian race” and prevents the baba from becoming involved in foreign or domestic politics. Common practices among the American Bektashis are the commemoration of ASHURA, when Husayn, grandson of the prophet Muhammad, was martyred in 680 A.D. at Karbala; the celebration of Nevruz, the Persian new year and the birthday of Ali ibn Talib, the son-in-law of the prophet Muhammad and one of the first four caliphs of Islam; and other Shi’a holidays. At the Detroit *tekke* more than 500 people have been known to attend the full lamb meals on the major Bektashi holidays. Muslim-American women in Detroit have been more likely to participate in the rituals and life in the *tekke* than their counterparts in the *tekkes* in Albania.

Bektashis practicing in America may or may not attend a mosque, but many attend both the mosque and the *tekke*. After the death of Baba Rexheb in 1995, the leadership of the Bektashi community transferred to Baba Flamur Shkalla. Bektashi communities have been founded all over the United States, with centers in Michigan, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Challenges for the Bektashi community in the United States have included finding an acceptable baba, or “leader,” and the perception that the Bektashi order is more like a prestigious club than a religious organization.

The presence of Bektashi Muslims in the United States from the 1950s serves as an important reminder of the long-standing diversity of American Islamic religious and ethnic groups. Bektashi practices directly challenge STEREOTYPES of Islam as a male-centered religion, since female students of

the order have long performed rituals alongside men. These practices also show that there are other forms of prayer in Islam besides the salat, the “prescribed prayers” performed in the Arabic language. Finally, the religious devotion of Bektashis disproves the idea that a strong sense of Muslim identity leads Muslim Americans to question their loyalty to the United States—quite the opposite has been true, as strongly anticommunist Bektashi practitioners were vocal American patriots and religious Muslims.

Natalia Slain

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**Ben Solomon, Job** See JOB BEN SOLOMON.

### Bilali of Sapelo Island (ca. 1760– ca. 1859)

*West African manuscript author enslaved in Georgia*

Born in the Guinean highlands of West Africa sometime around 1760, Bilali was an overseer on a Georgia cotton plantation and the author of a famous and puzzling Arabic manuscript. According to a friend, he grew up in Timbo, the capital city of the mountainous and turbulent state of Futa Jalon. Throughout much of the 18th century, Futa Jalon was embroiled in civil conflict among rival warlords. Defeated armies and other captives were often sold into slavery regardless of their status as Muslims, who by custom were not meant to enslave other Muslims. Named for the prophet MUHAMMAD’s prayer-caller, Bilali was likely one such captive. Because he wrote in Arabic script, he may have been studying to be a scholar of SHARI’A, or Islamic “law,” in Timbo at the time of his enslavement.

Bilali, who was also known as Ben Ali, Belali Mahomet, and Bu Allah, was first taken to the Caribbean—the year is unknown—where he worked before Thomas Spalding purchased him in 1802. Spalding was a wealthy American planter who owned 4,000 acres and hundreds, perhaps thousands, of slaves on Sapelo Island, one of the Sea Islands off the GEORGIA SEACOAST, where there were few white residents. Bilali became an overseer of hundreds of slaves on Spalding’s plantation, perhaps using his knowledge of cotton cultivation to make the Spalding plantation an economically successful venture. He also distinguished himself as leader of a group of armed slaves against the British army in the War of 1812 and was credited with evacuating hundreds to the mainland during a huge hurricane in 1824. Bilali married a



woman named Phoebe and raised a large family of 12 sons and seven daughters.

Before he died around 1859, close to the age of 100, Bilali moved to Darien on the Georgia mainland, where he gave a remarkable manuscript to his friend and Presbyterian minister Francis R. Goulding. Since Goulding's son donated the manuscript to the Georgia State Library in 1930, Bilali's 13 pages of blotched, shaky Arabic script have fascinated scholars. Shielded by a thin leather cover, the paper was made in Italy, and although the ink bled through the worn pages, experts have painstakingly studied the document for other clues about its origins and its owner.

One translator suggested the writing was an attempt to copy an Islamic law book common to North and West African clerical students of Bilali's time, but this interpretation did not consider the notebook's other references to prayer and ritual washing. A more recent effort to decipher the document, which was transferred to the University of Georgia in 1992, has offered two more likely possibilities: With its incorrect spelling and unsteady grasp of Arabic script, Bilali either struggled to summon his knowledge of Arabic in his old age, or it was written by a student learning the language. Therefore, Bilali hid his notebook during his transatlantic passage on a slave ship, or he received the Italian-made paper after his crossing.

Throughout his life, Bilali maintained a strong Islamic identity. He wore a fez, gave four of his daughters Islamic names, and struggled to honor a regimen of ritual washing, praying, and fasting in spite of his bondage. Because he was an overseer, he was able to protect his children from being sold away, rearing his 12 sons and seven daughters on Sapelo Island. One white woman from Broughton Island, Georgia, who encountered Bilali's children in the late 1850s wrote in her diary that they were "tall and well-formed" and spoke a language, probably Fula, that she did not understand. She also said that the family "worshipped Mahomet," or Muhammad, which indicates Bilali was able to pass along his religious identity and traditions to his children.

In addition to Bilali's manuscript and the contemporaneous writings of white diarists, oral historical evidence has suggested that African Islamic religious traditions were maintained in some form in this isolated part of the American South. Bilali's descendants recalled the religious and cultural traditions of their ancestors in interviews with workers from the Savannah unit of the Georgia Writers Project, a federally funded program of the WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA). In the 1930s, Sapelo Island resident Katie Brown, the great granddaughter of Bilali, recollected the names of Bilali's daughters, some of whom had Anglo names such as Margaret and others who were called Medina and Fatima, which were African and Muslim in origin. Brown also recalled oral traditions of Bilali and his

wife, Phoebe, who were "very particular about the time they pray and they was very regular about the hour; [they prayed] when the sun come up, when it straight over the head, and when it set." Praying three times a day was a normal religious practice in many Islamic traditions, including some of those in West Africa. Three times a day, Bilali and Phoebe would prostrate themselves on a prayer rug and "bow to the sun," to the east—toward Mecca.

Brown also remembered hearing that "Bilali and his wife Phoebe prayed on the bead," suggesting that this couple used Muslim prayer beads to perform *DHIKR*, a meditative form of prayer in which the believer recites the names of God or short sayings. Bilali, Brown recalled, would pull each bead on a long string and recite words of devotion to God and his prophet, Muhammad. That Bilali used a long string of prayer beads suggests that he possessed the kind of beads used by the Qadiriyya, a Sufi order, or "pietistic" group popular in West Africa.

Wrested from his studies in the mountains of West Africa, Bilali of Sapelo Island maintained his Islamic spirituality until his death in the lowlands of the Georgia coast. An important figure in Muslim-American and U.S. history, he participated in the War of 1812 and gave his labor freely to the building of the American economy. Memories of him lived on in the stories of his descendants, and together with his manuscript and the observations of his contemporaries, he offers proof that Islamic religion and African Islamic cultural practices were part of America's past.

Jonathan Todd Hancock

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**birth control**    See CONTRACEPTION.

**"Black Muslims"**    See NATION OF ISLAM.

**Blakey, Art (Ibn Buhaina, Abdullah) (1919–1990)**  
*hard bop jazz drummer*

Art Blakey was a Grammy award-winning drummer and member of the Jazz Hall of Fame who was part of a wave of jazz artists who converted to Islam in the 1940s. A self-taught hard bop jazz drummer and educator, Blakey also cofounded the Jazz Messengers, a jazz group that launched the careers of musicians such as Wynton Marsalis, Woody Shaw, Terence Blanchard, Keith Jarrett, and Branford Marsalis.

Blakey was born on October 11, 1919, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Blakey claimed that the church was where he learned to play the piano and to keep rhythm. By the time he was 14, Blakey had been expelled from school either for writing a pro-Africa essay or for behaving poorly. Whatever the reason, Blakey was soon working in Pittsburgh's steel mills and coal mines. Such grueling employment convinced him to work harder on his piano skills.

In the 1930s, Blakey switched from piano to drums and led his own big band. Working in Pittsburgh clubs, Blakey met drummers Chick Webb and Big Sid Catlett, who gave Blakey lessons on drumming and showmanship. In 1942, Blakey worked for Mary Lou Williams's group in Pittsburgh and toured NEW YORK CITY.

In 1943, Blakey went South with Fletcher Henderson's big band and suffered a serious head injury in a brawl with white men. He was not expected to live, but a dangerous operation, in which a metal plate was inserted in his head, saved his life.

By 1944, Blakey's reputation had prompted Billy Eckstine to hire him in his big band with Dizzy Gillespie as the musical director and Charlie Parker as lead saxophone. Blakey's drumming flourished under the leadership of more experienced players. In 1947, the band broke up and Blakey found work as a freelance drummer, recording with Thelonious Monk. He went on to become one of the premier drummers of the jazz world, producing thundering sounds with his hands and legs, a style that was called "hard bop."

Blakey began calling himself Muslim in the late 1940s and changed his name to Abdullah Ibn Buhaina. Kahili Ahmed Nasir, an AHMADI MUSLIM AMERICAN missionary who converted other New York jazz musicians, may have converted Blakey. Around the time of his conversion, Blakey led a band called the 17 Messengers, whose members may have all been Muslim. The group's name reflects the prophet Muhammad's role as the messenger of God as well as Blakey's notions of jazz as a conduit for God's message.

Members of the band used Arabic names, wore turbans, and read the QUR'AN. The message of racial equality espoused by the Ahmadi Muslims was attractive to these African-American musicians. In 1948, Blakey went to West Africa to study ARABIC, Islam, and drumming. After at least one year in Africa, he returned to the United States.

With pianist Horace Silver, Blakey founded the quintet (sometimes sextet) known as the Jazz Messengers. Silver left the band in 1956, and Blakey continued as the central bandleader, hiring only young musicians. From 1955 to 1961, his group recorded several successful records with the Blue Note record label. Blakey aimed not only for commercial success but also to educate younger musicians through real-world experience. He was famous for firing musicians once they started to develop an identity apart from the band, replacing them with younger, less-experienced musicians. The result was that Blakey became known as a "one-man university," coaching, teaching, and developing young artists for four decades.

Blakey stopped practicing Islam in the late 1950s. From various accounts of his decision, there seem to be two reasons explaining why. The first is that he found that the traveling musician's life was incompatible with a religious person's life. The second reason, given by his second wife, Diana Bates, was that Blakey discovered that an imam whom he held in high regard harbored racist ideas. Since Blakey had turned to Islam to escape Christian racism, this discovery may have led to an irreparable crisis of faith. He continued to use his Muslim name and recited prayers from the Qur'an but took spiritual refuge largely in his art.

Jazz was a refuge for Blakey, and he encouraged others to think of it the same way. He often told his audiences that the music flowed from God through the musicians to the audience. The purpose of jazz, he said, was to "wipe off the dust of everyday life." It was also a source of expressing African Americans' roots in suffering, survival, and racial contact. Although Blakey insisted that jazz was not about Africa but African Americans' experience in North America, he was influenced by African drumming practices. These influences appeared in his tuning practices and in his mastery of polyrhythm, or the ability to play four separate rhythmic lines at once.

Though Blakey's popularity and that of jazz music declined in the 1970s, he experienced a renaissance in the 1980s. Still functioning as a bandleader, Blakey helped to shape the careers of Wynton Marsalis, Branford Marsalis, and Terence Blanchard, all of whom would become popular musicians in their own right. In 1982, Blakey was inducted into the Jazz Hall of Fame. In 1984, he received a Grammy for Best Jazz Instrumental Performance, Group, on *New York Scene*. In 2005, Blakey posthumously received a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

Blakey died on October 16, 1990. During his lifetime, he had been married four times—to Clarice Stewart in 1937, Diana Bates in 1956, Atsuko Nakamura in 1968, and Anne Arnold in 1983. Lorraine Poole was his common-law wife in the 1950s. Blakey had a total of 10 children: Akira, Art, Jr., Evelyn, Jackie, Kadijah, Kenji, Gamal, Gwendolyn, Sakeena, and Takashi.

Blakey was representative of a generation of African Americans who found respite from racism, however brief, in an Islamic identity in the 1940s and 1950s. A groundbreaking jazz artist, he also played an important role in creating the sense that Islam was linked to black freedom—cultural as well as political. Many of the jazz artists around Blakey saw their Islamic identity not simply as a religion but also as an ethnicity whose meaning could change depending on the circumstances in which they found themselves. Sometimes they said they were Muslim, *not* black. Other times, they saw Islam as the ultimate expression of their black identity. Blakey was one of these creative figures whose religious, racial, ethnic, and musical improvisations collided on and off stage.

Brandi Denison

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### Bosnian-American Muslims

The Bosnian-American community in the United States is more than 100 years old. Coming as manual laborers, they helped build America's cities and its economy, even while dreaming of returning to Bosnia. Later Bosnian Americans sought to bridge the gap they perceived between Islam and modern American society and created opportunities for interfaith dialogue. Bosnian-American Muslims have also struggled with intergenerational tensions and coped with the influx of refugees in the 1990s that resulted from the BOSNIAN WAR. Refugees in established Bosnian-American communities helped nurture the growth of many MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS, even in cities where there was no historical Bosnian community.

In the late 19th century, Bosnian Muslims began immigrating to the United States in significant numbers, often by way of Germany. Mostly young men came and began working in mines, on public works projects, and in other unskilled or low-skilled labor jobs. Though they often lacked formal education, they contributed to the growth of several cities, especially CHICAGO, where in 1906 they created a mutual aid society and a long-lived coffeehouse called Dzemijet ul-Hajrije. Many hoped to return home to build an independent Bosnia, which though technically a part of the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire (until 1908) was actually administered

by the Habsburg (Austro-Hungarian) Empire. Because the nature of their stay in the United States was temporary, Bosnian Muslims resisted permanent ties such as MARRIAGE, home buying, and learning English. Many never returned home, however, and were buried, increasingly in Islamic CEMETERIES, in the United States.

Following the end of WORLD WAR II in 1945, a new wave of Bosnian immigrants arrived. The political situation in Bosnia had changed again, and Bosnia was now incorporated as a region of Yugoslavia, a communist country led by the dictator Josip Broz Tito. Many were looking for opportunity outside of war-devastated Europe, especially those Bosnians who had sided with the Axis powers (including Germany and Italy) against Tito's communist forces. Others opposed the religious repression instigated by the new government.

In the 1960s, Bosnian professionals, in addition to manual laborers and political exiles, immigrated to the United States. Tito lifted travel restrictions in this period, and Bosnians from social classes not previously represented in high numbers took advantage of this opportunity to leave. These Bosnians included urban professionals such as teachers and engineers and many others with formal educations. This group benefited from the Bosnians who had come before them, especially if they went to cities such as Chicago or New York. Already-established COFFEEHOUSES, clubs, and community centers eased their transition. In addition, this group, who came as families, generally had the intention of making the United States their home, giving them greater incentive to invest in businesses, homes, marriage, and EDUCATION for their children and themselves. This led Bosnians to become more involved in POLITICS and other aspects of the community outside their ethnic group. Bosnian Americans emphasized the importance of interfaith dialogue with the wider community. This was a focus of their first mosque in Chicago, which opened in 1957.

In the 1960s and 1970s, it remained important for Bosnian Americans to retain their cultural traditions, such as MUSIC and the RELIGIOUS LIFE they considered unique to Bosnia. Women played far more active roles in these institutions than they had in Bosnia—from organizing fundraisers to teaching religious-themed classes in the Saturday schools. Some Bosnians saw this as an effect of Christian-American customs, in which women's roles in the public life of the church were highly visible.

Second- and third-generation Bosnian Americans showed the most divergence from Bosnian culture. While the community's elders continued to encourage Bosnian identity through practices such as marrying within the community, children who grew up in the United States—and were more confident in navigating its cultural landscape—branched out beyond the community. First-generation Bosnian Americans felt nervous at this expansion and often refused to hand over

leadership of community roles to the second and third generations, further exacerbating the cultural divide. The tension was felt in the home as well, as Bosnians boys began DATING non-Muslim girls and introducing them to their FAMILIES as girlfriends. Some mosques attempted to bridge this division by offering classes in U.S. citizenship as well as Islam, emphasizing the compatibility of the two. The Chicago imam, Camil Avdic (Kamil Avdich), wrote a pioneering book on the subject, *Outline of Islam*, for Muslim-American children.

In the 1990s, a new influx of Bosnians arrived in the United States, most fleeing the Bosnian War, which had followed Bosnia's declaration of independence and targeted Muslims in particular in acts of genocide. The United States granted many of these Bosnians refugee status, which provided them a certain amount of governmental assistance, but this help often proved inadequate. Receiving Social Security numbers in order to work was only the first step in a long process of learning English, receiving job training, finding housing, acquiring transportation, finding schools, and dealing with a level of intricate bureaucracy they rarely experienced in their often rural home villages and towns. Financial challenges changed family dynamics, as women sought work outside the home, increasing their economic equality with men in the family. Extended families were broken up by necessity, further eroding rural traditions. These challenges, socially and financially, proved too much for many, leading to frustration with their situation and the U.S. government. Many put their hopes in their children to find their way in the United States.

Bosnian Americans and Muslim Americans in general responded to the refugee crisis with great activity. PHILANTHROPY directed toward Bosnians and other refugees became central to Muslim-American life, especially to provide for orphans and widows. Others sponsored refugee families. The three Bosnian-American mosques in St. Louis hired Bosnian-speaking imams, hoping to provide a place of worship for refugees. Others sent money to Bosnia for rebuilding destroyed schools and mosques, more than 1,000 of which were lost in the war, but the task of caretaking remained great. In 2000, there were nearly 100,000 Bosnians living in the United States. Many were placed in parts of the country where no Bosnians had been before, heightening the profile of Bosnian Americans. Non-Muslim Americans who hosted and helped Bosnians often had their STEREOTYPES about Muslims challenged by these European Muslims who were the victims of horrendous violence. Until the 1990s, many Americans were simply unaware that there were indigenous Muslims in Europe and that Muslims there were the victims of genocide. This also provided a new opportunity for dialogue among different faiths and examination of the deadly consequences of intolerance.

Bruce Burnside

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### Bosnian War

In 1992, the province of Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence from the socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a communist country in southeastern Europe. Bosnia had historically been a multireligious area consisting of Muslims, Orthodox and Catholic Christians, and Jews. However, rather than supporting the multireligious character of the new government, many people in Bosnia instead identified with nationalist struggles in neighboring provinces. Some Catholics in Bosnia sympathized with Croatian aspirations, and many Orthodox Christians looked to Serbia for identity and support. Following the declaration of independence on April 5, 1992, Serb-identified forces attacked Muslim civilians in eastern Bosnia. Soon, the whole of the country was plunged into a war involving Serb and Croat forces and the multireligious, but Muslim dominated, Bosnian army. All sides suffered casualties. However, Muslim civilians and soldiers were the most severely affected. Charges and evidence of genocide, concentration camps, and rape camps soon appeared. As news of the war spread to the United States, Muslim Americans responded in a number of ways, both politically and personally.

The Bosnian War spurred a period of unprecedented political activity for Muslim Americans. Rabbi David Sapperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, guided Muslim lobbying groups in the United States such as the American Muslim Council (AMC) through the political maze of Congress, the State Department, and the embassies in order to encourage U.S. intervention in Bosnia, military and otherwise. American Muslims met with President Bill Clinton and Anthony Lake of the National Security Council to talk about U.S. policy toward Bosnia. On May 15, 1993, the AMC helped organize a protest that attracted 50,000 Muslims to Washington, D.C. Later in the year, the Muslim Women's League (MWL) organized with Jewish women's groups and testified before Congress about the rape of Muslim women in Bosnia by Serbian forces.

Despite the widespread concern among Muslim Americans for Bosnia, they held differing opinions about what responses the U.S. government should make to the crisis. Some believed that President Clinton was ignoring the



plight of Bosnians by refusing to lift the arms embargo they saw as hindering Bosnian forces. The AMC and the Muslim Public Affairs Council supported the Dole-Lieberman bill of July 1995 that would have lifted the embargo. Others believed that the president tacitly looked away as the Islamic Republic of Iran armed the Bosnians, in spite of the embargo.

American Muslims also began donating to various charities concerned with the caretaking of Bosnian Muslims. Groups such as the American Women's Association in Gilbert, Arizona, began directly assisting newly arrived Bosnian refugees. The largest mosque in Orange County, California, provided housing for war refugees. In Seattle, Washington, the League of American Muslims (LAM) worked with Christian and Jewish groups to find housing for Bosnians fleeing their war-torn country.

Some Muslim Americans became directly involved in the Bosnian War and its aftermath by traveling to the war zone. Samer Hathout, the founding president of the MWL, traveled to Croatia in 1993 to investigate the condition of Bosnian refugees.

Members of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION organized multifaith dialogues in Sarajevo after the war. In exceptional cases, some American Muslims fought with Bosnian forces. Isa Abdullah Ali, a Muslim from Washington, D.C., traveled to and fought in Bosnia in the final year of the war after watching Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, call for the extermination of Bosnia's Muslims on television.

At the war's end in 1995, there were 100,000 civilian and military deaths and millions of refugees. A fragile peace was granted to an independent Bosnia under U.N. control. However, many areas of the country were "ethnically cleansed," its religious groups alienated and separated to an unprecedented degree.

Though the responses to the Bosnian War were varied for Muslim Americans, there was a shared horror at the war itself. Commonality was also found in the multifaith character of many of these responses. In 1993, Suhail Ahmad of the LAM expressed the hope many Muslims found in these cooperative actions to the *Seattle Times*: "If from this tragedy we can learn to come together no matter what the crisis or people's faith, then I think we have a happening of historical proportion."

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## Boston, Massachusetts

The birthplace of the American Revolution, the greater Boston region has long played a prominent role as a home to immigrants of every religious hue. Whether fleeing religious persecution or studying at one of Boston's universities, Muslims have made Boston their home from colonial times to the 21st century. Boston's Muslims have represented every country in the Muslim world. In addition, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS in Boston have played an especially prominent role on the national stage.

Muslims in Boston, who probably number in the tens of thousands, are of South Asian, Arab, and African-American descent, with a smaller number from Iran, Turkey, parts of Africa, and other regions. By the 21st century, the Boston metropolitan area boasted dozens of MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS that accommodate Muslims of every possible religious orientation and ethnic identity. Religious services have been held in everything from church basements and private homes to elegant mosques and the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center located on Malcolm X Boulevard in the heart of Roxbury.

### EARLIEST MUSLIMS

The ports of New England hosted ships and visitors from Muslim countries from the revolutionary period. The earliest Muslims in New England, however, did not arrive of their own volition. African-American Muslim slaves first arrived sometime after 1600, making them one of the first Old World religious groups in the Boston area. Little is known about these communities, though future research is likely to reveal a fuller picture of the black Muslims who were captured in West Africa and forced to settle in New England.

In the early 1900s, ARABIC-speaking subjects of the Ottoman Empire settled in New England. The Arab-American community that lived in the working class town of Worcester, about 45 miles west of Boston, came predominantly from Lebanon, especially from the village of Mahiethett. Most of these immigrants were Christians, although they included a significant number of Druze, Shi'a, and Sunni Muslims. In central Boston, many Arab families made the area around Shawmut Avenue their home. This neighborhood became home to a number of Arab restaurants and COFFEEHOUSES. However, as the community grew and became more entrenched in American life, the immigrants slowly moved to the suburbs, and Shawmut Avenue no longer retained its Arabic flavor.

Muslims have made homes in neighborhoods that became associated with other immigrant groups. For instance, many Syrian families settled in the South Cove neighborhood of Boston's Chinatown. With every new wave of migration, the neighborhood changed. For instance, the Josiah Quincy Elementary School in Chinatown had a majority of Syrian

students in 1938. By the 1960s, Chinese children made up the bulk of Josiah Quincy students.

The early Muslims in greater Boston also began establishing civic societies and charities. For instance, the Syrian community in Worcester founded the Syrian Brotherhood Orthodox Society of Worcester in 1932. Despite its title, the society did not have a religious bent but accepted all Syrians regardless of their religious identity. Another prominent Muslim charity, the Angora Orphan Aid Association, was formed to raise funds to help Turkish orphans. While founded by Turkish and Russian immigrants, this charity had members and donors from the larger Muslim community.

#### MUSLIMS IN NEARBY QUINCY

Arab-American Muslim immigrant Mohamed Omar probably founded one of the first mosques in 20th-century New England. Having come to America to avoid being drafted in the Ottoman army—he had already lost six of his brothers to war—Omar was part of the seven Muslim “founding families” of Quincy, 10 miles south of Boston, who came to the United States between 1875 and 1912. Some of them served in the American Expeditionary Force in WORLD WAR I, while their children often served in WORLD WAR II. John Omar, for example, received a Purple Heart for his bravery in combat during World War II.

In the early 20th century, Lebanese Muslims prayed and held community functions in local churches. The demand for a mosque stemmed from the examples of their Christian and Jewish neighbors. Mohamed Omar did not possess any formal religious education but became a leader of the community because of his greater general education. He advised on religious matters such as the beginning of Ramadan, the rites of marriage, and the burying of the dead. Those who kept HALAL consumed only meat bought from the Jewish butchers, whose kosher meat was halal, or “religiously permissible.” When the first Muslim in the community died, his funeral was held at Sweeney’s Funeral Home. This traditionally Irish-Catholic funeral home became the site for Quincy’s Muslim funerals over the next generation.

In 1937, Quincy’s Lebanese Muslims founded the Arab American Banner Society, which represented the ideals of Arab unity and cohesion in the face of colonialism. It also championed American ideals, and its constitution stated that “the Society shall endeavor to conduct a school to teach the Arabic language and to educate our youths in the fundamentals of American life and education.” In 1962, the society decided to cement its position in the community by building a mosque, the Islamic Center of New England (ICNE).

By the middle 20th century, a generation of Muslims had been born and raised in the Boston area. They usually did not speak Arabic or have formal religious education. They

typically relied on elders or more established immigrants within their own community for religious guidance. That changed in 1982 with the arrival of Talal Eid, a young Al Azhar University graduate from Lebanon who had accepted a position as the new imam of the Quincy mosque. Eid presided over the marriages, deaths, trials, and tribulations of a generation of greater Boston Muslims. He became a prominent figure in Boston and beyond.

Eid also led the first Muslim prayer at a Harvard commencement in 1997. Eventually, he moved from the Quincy mosque to Sharon, Massachusetts, and redoubled his efforts at educating and reaching out to a wider New England audience. Even after resigning from that position, he has continued to work for the community. He has also achieved national prominence as the first Muslim member of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Imam Eid has represented the community on visits to dignitaries such as the late pope John Paul II and current pope Benedict XVI.

#### MUSLIMS IN ROXBURY

The predominantly black Boston neighborhood of Roxbury played an important role in the development of Islam among African Americans. NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) leaders MALCOLM X (1925–65) and LOUIS FARRAKHAN (1933– ) spent part of their adolescence in Roxbury, and both later preached at Temple No. 11, which was formally purchased by the Nation of Islam in 1957. During the 1950s, the NOI also ran a grocery store and a restaurant there. After W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008) altered the teachings of the NOI to reflect Sunni Islamic principles in the mid-1970s, the name of the temple was changed to Masjid Al-Qur’an, or “Mosque of the Qur’an.” An African-American convert named Shakir Mahmoud has run the mosque since 1977.

Following Mohammed’s example, the mosque became a major site in Roxbury for interfaith activities, and by the 1990s, it developed a lasting partnership with a local synagogue. Local rabbis have spoken at the mosque, while local imams have spoken at the temple. In addition, Roxbury became home to a new version of Temple No. 11, which was founded after Louis Farrakhan reestablished a version of the NOI that followed the teachings of ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) in 1978. In addition, the NOI established a private girls’ school.

More recently, Roxbury has become home to a large number of SOMALI MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS. The area near the Roxbury Crossing subway stop and the Roxbury Community College became home to three Somalian restaurants, a café, a grocery, and a women’s boutique. Abdillahi Abdirahman, popularly known as Mash, opened the Butterfly Café inside the Roxbury Crossing station in 1998. Mash has also operated a money transfer business that helps Somali immigrants send remittances back to their home country.

Abdullah Anshur, another Somali Bostonian, operated two restaurants in Roxbury. His Ashur restaurant became a popular meeting place, with an appeal that extended well beyond the Somali and Muslim communities. The restaurant served buffalo chicken wraps and chili cheese fries alongside goat and biryani. Anshur was part of a wave of Somali immigrants who arrived after 1993, a period during which several Muslim-owned clothing stores and gift shops came to line the South End area. These included Mabrouk Fashion on Harrison Avenue, which sold scarves, dresses, and attar, a kind of Arabian perfume.

By the late 20th century, large events such as HOLIDAY gatherings were held in the Reggie Lewis Athletic Center in the Roxbury Community College. Muslims have celebrated the end of Ramadan at this track since 1990. Eid festivities at Reggie Lewis regularly have drawn at least 5,000 people to the track. The image of Muslims congregating in Reggie Lewis has become indelibly Bostonian; the Arabic calligraphy that decorated the Roxbury Crossing station entrance was only one piece of evidence indicating how much Muslims had added to the international nature of the city.

#### POST-1965 IMMIGRATION

Mosque-building accelerated with the inflow of Muslim immigrants after the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965. This legislation made it easier for educated, professional immigrants from Asia and Africa to make the United States their home. The Boston area, with its world-class universities, became a haven for well-educated Muslim immigrants. By 1974, the Quincy mosque membership had tripled and was no longer mainly Syrian and Lebanese. As more Muslims settled in Boston, they built schools to educate children in Islamic studies. Shrewsbury's Al Hamra Academy became the first accredited Islamic elementary school in Massachusetts. By 2009, the state had 11 ISLAMIC SCHOOLS, including the Boston Islamic School in Roxbury.

For much of the 20th century, Shi'a Muslims in Boston had worshipped with their Sunni counterparts in private houses or church basements, but in 1995, seven Shi'a families opened the Islamic Masumeen Center of New England. Located in Hopkinton, a suburb north of Boston, this mosque has mainly served Shi'a of Pakistani descent.

ISMA'ILI MUSLIM AMERICANS have also settled in Boston. The current aga khan, the leader of the Nizari branch, studied at Harvard University, and most of his children also attended university in the greater Boston area. The aga khan funded a prestigious architecture program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology that he still oversees. The aga khan's followers worship at a JAMAATKHANA located in Allston, near the Boston University campus. The building has served as both a religious and social meeting place for Boston Isma'ilis.

The AHMADI MUSLIM AMERICAN community in the region has thrived and found a place to worship in the suburb of Sharon, 25 miles south of Boston. One of the oldest Muslim groups to immigrate to the United States, Ahmadi missionaries first arrived in the 1920s, but the first Ahmadis probably came to Massachusetts in the 1960s. They established a mosque in 1997. South Asian immigrants and African Americans make up the bulk of worshippers at the Ahmadi mosque.

Several Sufi orders have also opened branches in Boston. The BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN FELLOWSHIP has met regularly at the Cambridge Adult Learning Center since 1979. The Sufi Order International, a movement formerly called the SUFI ORDER OF THE WEST, has had a large following in Boston. The adherents follow the practices of Sufi teacher INAYAT KHAN (1882–1927).

In 2002, the Islamic Society of Boston began making plans for a massive complex, a “mega-mosque” in Roxbury, that would finally unite immigrant and indigenous Islam in Boston. The mosque was shrouded in controversy and attracted negative media attention. It became the first mosque built and funded by Arab Americans and South Asian Americans but located in a predominantly black neighborhood. When the mosque opened for its first night prayers, offered during Ramadan in 2007, the crowd was a picture of diversity—of immigrant and nonimmigrant Boston Muslims propelling the historic city forward.

Muslims of all backgrounds have changed the physical landscape of Boston. Haymarket, the old Italian open-air food market near the North End, began to offer customers falafel and grape leaves along with its more traditional fare of plum tomatoes and antipasto. The Blackstone Market in Haymarket made space for a halal butcher, selling meat butchered in accordance with Muslim DIETARY LAWS only a stone's throw away from the oldest restaurant in America.

Muslim Bostonians have also made enormous contributions to the economy. In 1981, Sheikh Rahman, a Bangladeshi American, founded SAR Engineering, a New England-based construction firm that has provided services to high-profile projects locally and internationally. In addition to completing engineering designs for Bangladeshi embassies in Thailand, South Africa, and Saudi Arabia, SAR Engineering led the construction and design of the John Adams Courthouse in Boston, the Thomas Crane Library in Quincy, and the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School in Sudbury.

Dr. Batool Kazim, a Pakistani-American badminton champion who arrived in Boston in the 1970s, became a prominent psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Kazim's specialty was sport psychiatry and the effect of sports on mental health. She has also lectured widely on breaking the silence on domestic violence within the Muslim community.

In addition, the younger generation of Boston Muslims made a significant impact. Basim Usmani and Shahjehan Khan, who grew up in the Boston suburbs, formed the Muslim punk band the Kominas. Their band has been one of the most popular and acclaimed TAQWACORE acts. *Taqwacore* refers to punk rock inspired by Islamic culture. The Kominas play timely songs that denounce homophobia and named their first record “Wild Nights in Guantánamo Bay.” Another young Boston Muslim who appeared on the national stage is Fatima Siad, who became a controversial contestant on *America’s Next Top Model*. She placed third in the competition and spoke out against female genital mutilation (FGM). She has continued modeling and spreading the message of FGM as a dangerous cultural practice.

From the small, tight-knit communities of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to a community of thousands who have become central players in the educational, business, religious, and medical sectors of greater Boston, Muslim Bostonians have grown in number and influence. They have affected every aspect of life in the city and have contributed as Boston’s doctors, politicians, lawyers, athletes, activists, and entrepreneurs.

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**Boumediene v. Bush** See LAW.

### Boy Scouts

Inspired by *Scouting for Boys*, a work published by British officer Lord Robert Baden-Powell in 1908, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) was founded in 1910. The organization has long offered American youths a religiously based moral discipline while refining citizenship obligations through means of community service and spiritual, individual, and societal betterment. The purpose of the scouting program, according to Baden-Powell, was “that the next generation may be sane in an insane world, and develop the higher realization of service, active service of love, and duty to God and neighbor.”

Muslim-American males have been involved in scouting from the beginning of the Boy Scouts’ history. As early

as WORLD WAR I, Syrian Boy Scout chapters flourished in BOSTON; NEW YORK CITY; CLEVELAND; Manchester, New Hampshire; and other American cities. Taking pride in their heritage, Syrian and Lebanese troops were sponsored by Arab-American associations, female civic institutions, and churches but included both Christians and Muslims, emphasizing their joint American patriotism. In 1942, Syrian Boy Scout Troop 72 of the Worcester Area Council, Massachusetts (now Boy Scouts of America Mohegan Council, Inc.), drilled at city hall to spur the sales of war savings bonds and stamps as part of the war effort. Achieving sponsorship from the Worcester female organization Friendly House in 1932, Troop 72 continued to provide effective training in leadership and community service for boys until its demise in the mid-1980s.

In the 1970s, all-Muslim Boy Scout troops began to take shape in cities such as New York and ATLANTA. In 1982, African-American Muslim leader W. D. MOHAMMED joined Pakistani-American Boy Scout official Syed Ehtesham Haider Naqvi, Boy Scout Chief Executive Ben Love, Turkish diplomat Engin Ansay, and Guinean diplomat Youssouf Sylla to establish the Islamic Council on Scouting in North America (ICSNA), which became custodian of all religious awards for Muslim scouts. These awards have included the “Bismillah” emblem for Cub scouts, the “In the Name of God” medal for boy scouts, and the “Allaho Akbar,” or “God Is Great,” emblem for scout leaders.

To earn the Bismillah emblem, both Cub and Webelos Scouts must demonstrate an understanding of the QUR’AN, the prophets, Islamic prayers, pilgrimage, religious HOLIDAYS, and Muslim heroes from the classical age of Islam. Youth must also have regular attendance at a mosque or Islamic center and write a report about a great Muslim American. Scouts earn additional points for developing competence in ISLAMIC THOUGHT and theology and must pass a summary examination on a range of theological topics. These Scouts also lead congregational prayers, fast during the month of Ramadan, and perform two major community service projects.

According to the *Muslim Star*, the journal of the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, the first recorded instance in which a Boy Scout on the East Coast was awarded the “In the Name of God” emblem was on June 16, 1970, in an Eagle Scout ceremony held in Ramsey, New Jersey. This emblem, which parallels similar awards for Muslim and non-Muslim Scouts, who “do my best to do my duty to God,” has been difficult to obtain. In the 1980s, only two to three such medals were awarded annually. By the end of the 20th century, however, the number of scouts completing the requirements increased, and by 2005, the average was 75 to 80 awarded each year. The BSA does not require religious awards in the advancement of Scout ranks but does officially endorse them.



The ICSNA has sponsored Boy Scout groups nationwide, including troops in New York, New Jersey, Illinois, California, Ohio, Maryland, WASHINGTON, D.C., Virginia, and Michigan. In the 1990s, the Muslim American Society, formed as an outgrowth of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION in 1992, also began to sponsor Muslim Scouting in cooperation with the ICSNA.

Though comprising only a small fraction of the 7.5 million Boy Scouts in the United States, the total number of all-Muslim Boy Scout troops began to swell in the early 21st century. Chartered Islamic Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Venturing Crews grew from 58 units in 2000 to 98 in 2007. All-Muslim Scout packs and troops attached to private religious organizations have been established in more than 22 states nationwide and involve more than 2,000 Muslim Scouts and leaders. Muslim Scouting groups have said that the BSA organization prescribes a strong structure for cultivating leadership skills within the larger boundaries of the Islamic faith. Muslim Boy Scouts have continued to join non-Muslim Boy Scout troops as well.

After the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, all-Muslim troops felt pressure to break traditional American stereotypes of Muslims as being isolationist and Islam as being fundamentally anti-American. Through marching in Memorial Day and Independence Day parades, together with public acts of community betterment and cooperation with other non-Muslim faiths, all-Muslim Boy Scout troops have melded their commitments as religious Muslims and patriotic Americans. Muslim Scouts have also cultivated

pragmatic life skills and a deeper understanding of Islam. With its camp outings, its community service projects, and its various personal development activities and lessons, the BSA has helped to refashion popular perceptions of Islam into a positive and constructive image for Muslim-American youths.

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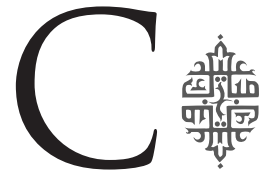
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**Brown v. McGinnis** See LAW.

**burial** See CEMETERIES; FUNERALS.



**CAIR** See COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS.

### calligraphy

Calligraphy is a form of artwork composed solely of letters of an alphabet. Arabic calligraphy, used in the United States and throughout the world, is one of the most important and universal elements of Islamic art. Arabic calligraphy has been closely associated with the QUR'AN, and Qur'anic calligraphy came to be recognized as a highly regarded art form as early as the ninth century. While Arabic calligraphy is used as often in stand-alone Islamic art pieces, the art form also decorates everyday objects and structures, including rugs, mosques, and tombs.

Generally speaking, six recognized scripts are used in Arabic calligraphy. The first form used in rendering the Qur'an is known as *kufic*. The kufic style is distinguished by proportional measurements while maintaining angularity and a squareness typical of earlier Arabic scripts. The first kufic Qur'ans often had only three or four lines on a page due to the large size of the letters in an attempt to make the verses legible. After the 13th century, kufic declined in popularity, although it can be found today in its rectangular form for decorating chapter headings of modern printings of the Qur'an. Other common styles include the *thuluth*, *nasakh*, *tauqi*, *muhaqqaq*, and *riq'a*. Also, zoomorphic calligraphy was developed in response to the discouragement of using figures in certain forms of Islamic art; Arabic letters or words were manipulated and structured into various forms, such as birds and flowers.

Learning calligraphy is a long and painstaking process, and students have been taught everything from holding the pen correctly to creating their own ink. Various masters have maintained their own secret formulas for ink, with ingredients ranging from black soot to ox gall. Trade secrets, such as the ingredients for colored ink, have been passed down only to initiated students to ensure the succession of craft masters. According to Islamic tradition, the line of calligraphy masters can be traced as far back as the days of the prophet MUHAMMAD and his fourth successor, Ali ibn Abi Talib, and

many masters even today refer to a relationship with a master of the 15th or 16th century. Only after the successful completion of studying all the arts connected to calligraphy was and is a student allowed to sign his own work.

As Islamic calligraphy is a religious art, traditions have also developed in conjunction with the various styles of calligraphy. For example, before starting on a piece, Islamic calligraphers usually utter a small prayer. Also, when an individual wishes to copy verses of the Qur'an, that person must make the ritual washing (*wudu*), as is usually done before prayer. As writing the sacred text is considered a form of worship, *wudu* is necessary to make one ready to undertake the task. It is a common belief among West African Muslims that one who practices writing out the Qur'an should wash away their ink work and drink the resulting mixture in order to prevent illness, and some AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES are said to have engaged in this practice.

The most famous Islamic calligrapher in the United States is Mohamed Zakariya. Born in 1942 and raised in California, Zakariya left a career in aerospace engineering to pursue the art of Islamic calligraphy after seeing a beautiful example hanging on the wall of an Armenian carpet shop. After converting to Islam and traveling around the world to study with various masters, such as Hasan Celebi, he was declared a master calligrapher in 1988. In 2001, Zakariya was asked by the U.S. Postal Service to design two postage stamps to commemorate the Islamic holidays Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. The stamps featured gold Arabic calligraphy on a blue background with the words *Eid Greetings*. As of 2010, Zakariya continued to produce artwork, with pieces selling between a few hundred to a few thousand dollars among a broad range of clients, many of whom possessed little comprehension of Arabic.

Mohamed Zakariya also trained his own students in the United States and regularly held exhibitions and workshops across the country. Although many materials used by calligraphy masters are still kept as trade secrets, Zakariya revealed what materials he used and freely offered advice to novices. For example, Zakariya explained the process of hand-grinding soot and gum for 30 hours to produce ink, marbling special paper with water and ox gall, and grinding gold leaf by hand to pro-

duce the pigment used in illuminating letters. For those unwilling to devote the time and effort needed to become master calligraphers, however, Zakariya suggested that one could use materials as simple as a bamboo or popsicle stick and purchase brown dye hand mixed with water and a thickening agent.

Natalia Slain

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**call to prayer** See *ADHAN*.

### Carson, André D. (1974– ) *United States representative*

André D. Carson became the second Muslim elected to Congress when he won a special election to fill a vacant seat in Indiana's Seventh Congressional District on March 13, 2008. The seat had formerly been held by his grandmother Julia Carson (1938–2007), who represented Indiana's 10th and Seventh Congressional Districts, consecutively, from January 3, 1997, to December 15, 2007. André Carson was the first Muslim to be elected to federal office from Indiana. Winning with 53 percent of the vote in the special election, he was reelected on November 4, 2008, garnering 65 percent of the vote in the general election.

Born on October 16, 1974, and raised in Indianapolis, Carson graduated with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice management from Concordia University–Wisconsin and a master's of business management from Indiana Wesleyan University. He was a local board investigative officer for the Indiana State Excise Police for nine years. In 2006, he began to work in the Indiana Department of Homeland Security's Intelligence Fusion Center in an antiterrorism unit. He was also a Democratic Party committeeperson in Center Township, Marion County, Indiana. Prior to his election to Congress, Carson was elected to the Indianapolis City-County Council in 2007 to replace Councilor Patrice Abdullah in the 15th council district of Indianapolis.

Although Carson is not a member of the NATION OF ISLAM and denies any specific link to its leader, LOUIS FARRAKHAN, he was endorsed by the Nation of Islam leader, who spoke at Julia Carson's funeral. Carson has described himself as an

"orthodox, universal, secular Muslim." Some have criticized Carson's alleged links to the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR), claiming that CAIR is an American front for terrorism. Such claims have not had a significant impact on his political career, and Carson has been careful to preserve the generally positive views of his mainly Christian constituents. Unlike Representative KEITH M. ELLISON (D-Minn.), the first Muslim elected to Congress, Carson took his oath of office holding a copy of the U.S. Constitution, not the QUR'AN.

At the same time, Carson, like Ellison, has not shied away from participating in Muslim-American community events. Carson's election to Congress became an instant symbol of Muslim-American success, and he has been asked to speak at Muslim-American meetings, celebrations, and conferences around the country. Muslim-American organizations have also asked both Ellison and Carson to represent the voices of Muslim Americans in various public outreach activities.

In Congress, Carson has become a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, and in June 2008, he announced he was joining the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Equality Caucus. He has also served on the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Science and Technology.

Soon after his election, Carson announced his endorsement of Democratic candidate Barack Obama for president on April 16, 2008, citing Obama's ability to unite America and bring change. Carson spoke at several Obama rallies during the campaign and helped Obama win the state in the 2008 general election, the first time a Democrat had carried Indiana since 1964.

Eren Tatari

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### A Muslim Congressman Supports Israel (2008)

On April 22, 2008, Representative André Carson (D-Ind.), who was elected to fill his grandmother's seat in Congress in a March 13, 2008, special election, joined his colleagues in the House of Representatives to congratulate the state of Israel on its 60th anniversary. Rising in "strong support" of House Concurrent Resolution 322, which reaffirmed "the bonds of close friendship and cooperation between the United States and Israel," was not exactly controver-

sial, given that 417 members of the House voted for the resolution, and none voted against. The fact that two of the 417 supporters were Muslims passed without comment in the media. Perhaps the media did not notice, or perhaps they did not think it important. Nevertheless, the support of Rep. André Carson for Israel showed the extent to which Muslim politicians had become integrated into mainstream American politics. Even if many Muslim Americans, especially Arab-American Muslims, thought of Israel's 60th anniversary as something to be mourned rather than celebrated, one of two Muslim members of Congress hailed Israel's accomplishments.



Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 322, a resolution recognizing the 60th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel. Mr. Speaker, beyond just being an influential world leader, the State of Israel has been a staunch and ardently loyal ally of the United States over the last several decades. This great nation's commitment to protecting its citizens and securing its homeland are simply unmatched. Since the founding of the modern State of Israel in 1948, the bond between the United States and our Middle East partner has grown and remained strong. It is incumbent that we as Members of Congress do all we can to make sure that this relationship continue[s] to flourish.

Mr. Speaker, the United States must make every effort possible to safeguard our relationship with the Middle East's only democracy, Israel. Now more than ever, we must diligently advance our shared interests and goals as it pertains to promoting peace and combating terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I would like to congratulate the State of Israel, the Israeli citizens, and the Jewish community on reaching this milestone. This great nation has much to celebrate and be proud of on its 60th birthday.



Source: *Congressional Record* (House), April 22, 2008, p. H2522. Available online. URL: [wais.access.gpo.gov](http://www.wais.access.gpo.gov). Accessed January 26, 2009.

## Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Cedar Rapids, a city of 126,000 on the Cedar River in eastern Iowa, is home to one of the nation's oldest mosques and about 50 historic ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIM extended families with a history of civic involvement. Muslim Arabs began reaching

Cedar Rapids around 1885, drawn there by Christian Arabs through chain migration, in which acquaintances encourage newer immigrants to follow them. The city's Christian Arab migration was about 10 times larger than that of Muslim Arabs. Many early Arab immigrants, mostly Lebanese and Syrian, worked as peddlers and set up dry goods stores from which they could supply other peddlers. Others worked as farmhands on German-owned farms.

In 1925, Muslims in Cedar Rapids, who numbered perhaps in the dozens but certainly no more than hundreds, formed the Rose of Fraternity Lodge, an organization that met for Friday congregational prayers. In the 1930s, they began building their own mosque, and on February 15, 1934, construction was completed on a small rectangular structure that the community celebrates as the oldest surviving purpose-built mosque in the United States. Incorporating a dome and a symbolic crescent, the building otherwise resembles an Iowa church or schoolhouse. It was used for prayer, social gatherings, and Sunday school. In 1948, Yahya William Aosey, who had immigrated to Cedar Rapids in 1907, donated 12 acres for a cemetery where the dead could be buried facing Mecca, in accordance with Islamic tradition. In the 1950s, Cedar Rapids resident and WORLD WAR II veteran Abdullah Igram petitioned the Eisenhower administration to add Islam as a religious option on military dog tags, metal identification markers worn by soldiers to aid in identifying bodies. In 1953, Igram convened the first meeting of the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (FIA). Igram also served as president of the Cedar Rapids branch of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

Cedar Rapids's Muslim Americans moved into a new mosque in 1971 and sold the original building, which members repurchased in the early 1990s and made into a cultural center. In 1996, the building, now known as the "Mother Mosque of America," was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The state of Iowa and the city of Cedar Rapids mark an Islamic recognition day each February 15, the anniversary of the Mother Mosque's completion. In the summer of 2008, when catastrophic flooding hit Cedar Rapids, the Mother Mosque was flooded, and most of the mosque's archival materials, kept in the basement, were destroyed.

In 1974, Cedar Rapids native Bill Aosey, Yahya William Aosey's son and one of the first Muslim Americans to serve in the Peace Corps, cofounded Midamar, a company that exports restaurant equipment and halal, or "religiously permissible Islamic food" to 26 countries. Having grown up in a state known for agribusiness, Aosey said he was inspired to start his business after witnessing malnutrition in other parts of the world.

Over their history, the Muslim Americans in Cedar Rapids have hired several foreign-born imams, or "religious leaders." Since 1983, Taha Tawil, born in Jerusalem, has



served as the mosque's imam and executive director. The Cedar Rapids mosque also has served Muslim students at the area's colleges. Tunisian immigrant Zeineb Mehdi, who first came to Cedar Rapids as a college student, was named Cedar Rapids Woman of the Year for her work as president of Women for Peace Iowa in 2003.

In the early 21st century, a plan to build a Muslim youth camp on federal land near Iowa City, 30 miles south of Cedar Rapids, ran into controversy. Spearheaded by the Aosey family, the campsite was intended to educate children about Islamic heritage and be open to anyone. The name Muslim Youth Camps of America (MYCA) purposely evoked the YMCA. Many objected that use of the land by a religious group was a violation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which has long been interpreted as preventing government from supporting or endorsing religion. Others, drawing on anti-Muslim stereotypes, labeled the project "Camp Terror." Despite setbacks, the group plans to complete construction of the camp in 2011.

The number of Muslim Americans in Cedar Rapids today remains small, which may be partly due to their having intermarried or converted to other religions. Many members of the city's Muslim community, however, express pride in being both Muslims and Iowans with a boosterism that fits in well in their home state. In reference to a famous line from the movie *Field of Dreams* (1989), a caption on the Mother Mosque Web site beneath a picture of the Cedar Rapids skyline asks, "Is this heaven? No, it is Cedar Rapids, Iowa!"

Brooke Sherrard

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### cemeteries

Cemeteries were among the first institutions established by and for Muslims living in the United States. Some immigrants in the early 20th century saved money to purchase land for distinctively Muslim cemeteries or for all-Muslim sections within preexisting burial grounds. This allowed their deceased friends and kin to be situated together in sites they could visit to pray for the dead and according to Muslim funerary customs. More recently, Muslim cemeteries have proliferated in

the United States, either through affiliations with MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS or as independent ventures. Despite the availability of options for burial in a Muslim cemetery in the United States, many Muslim Americans have chosen to be either repatriated to their countries of origin or to be buried in nonsectarian cemeteries among people of other faiths.

### EARLY MUSLIM BURIAL SITES AND CEMETERIES

The first burial sites for Muslims in the United States were established by AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES. Little is known about such sites, although future archaeological research will probably reveal new information, since African Americans in the South, like West Africans, often decorated their graves with pieces of broken glass, cups, pebbles, sea-shells, and other personal effects. This phenomenon has been documented as a popular practice along the GEORGIA SEACOAST, which was also the site of what may have been the largest presence of Muslim slaves in the United States. Some Muslim slaves blended their Islamic religious traditions with traditional African religious beliefs and may have thought that the placement of materials at the grave site would help release the spirit of the deceased.

The first documented Muslim-American cemeteries were established by Muslim immigrants who arrived from Africa and Asia at the end of the 19th century. Communities and some wealthy individual Muslim merchants began purchasing burial plots specifically for Muslim use, which they would then give or resell to others in the area. In 1904, for example, Arab developer Simon George purchased a burial plot from the city of Worcester, Massachusetts. He divided it into several plots, two of which he used for his own relatives.

When the Moslem Brotherhood Association of Worcester was founded 1918, it purchased 200 grave plots bordering an Arab-American Christian cemetery and sold them to families of Muslims in New England. Graves in the Muslim cemetery were marked by tombstones inscribed with the star and crescent moon symbol and writing in ARABIC or in Ottoman Turkish script. These tombstones, along with a tall, concrete, obelisk-shaped monument with a poem engraved on it about yearning to return to the homeland, attest to Muslims in the United States adapting their cemeteries to visually resemble others in the United States. It would have been more customary to keep them sparse, without monuments and with simpler grave markers.

Also in 1918, Albanian Muslim immigrants who came to work in the textile mills of Biddeford, Maine, purchased a Muslim plot in the Woodlawn cemetery. Having established a small mosque three years earlier, they used these lots to bury a significant number of members of their community who had died from an outbreak of the Spanish flu. After the flu outbreak, however, only a small number of them remained in the area, and the mosque ceased being used.



With the star and crescent placed in the arch over its gate, the Muslim cemetery near Ross, North Dakota, is the gravesite of a once-vibrant Muslim community in the early 20th century. (AP Photo/Minot Daily News, Jill Schramm)

In 1920, Sait Mahcit, a Sudanese man in DETROIT, purchased 300 grave lots in Roselawn cemetery for use by local Muslims, many of whom were young single males who had immigrated to work in the auto industry. Burials in Roselawn were overseen by Muslim funeral associations, organizations to which men paid dues while they were living to ensure that the other members of the association would provide them a proper burial upon their death. Mehmet Malik purchased a block of 538 lots in 1929, and other blocks were purchased later by various other Muslim funeral associations in Detroit. However, there remained many single men who had not joined and paid dues to a funeral association, and they were buried at public expense in whatever county they died and without regard to their religious customs.

In Ross, NORTH DAKOTA, there was a large population of Syrian Muslim settlers who established a Muslim cemetery called Rose Hill, with the first grave marker dating to 1920. Prior to its establishment, Syrian Muslims in the area had been buried in nearby Christian cemeteries. There were two Christians buried in Rose Hill, one the wife of a Muslim man and the

other their grandson. The cemetery remained in use after the mosque was torn down in 1979, with a marker placed as late as 1999, and the mosque was restored in 2005. While most of the 22 graves in the cemetery were marked with concrete slabs, one had a concrete houselike structure built above it. Comparable “little houses” over graves can be found in a Muslim section of a graveyard in Dunseith, North Dakota, home to many Lebanese settlers from roughly the same period.

Muslims in CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, also established a cemetery in 1948 that was located adjacent to the mosque built there in 1934. Land for it was donated by the Syrian merchant Yahya William Aosseay.

#### PROLIFERATION OF MUSLIM CEMETERIES

With the influx of Muslim immigrants to the United States after the passage of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, there was an increase of mosques and Islamic centers often supported, in part, by overseas donors. Many of these institutions have created either their own cemeteries or formed agreements with local cemeteries for the burial of their members. However,

since lots in these areas have often been limited in number and restricted to active members, there developed, since the late 1990s, a number of for-profit cemeteries catering particularly to the mortuary needs of Muslims. These for-profit cemeteries typically bring together Muslims from a variety of countries and cultures and bury them in the same way, imposing a standardized interpretation of Islamic funerary customs.

Although Muslim Americans have been legally protected in their establishment of cemeteries and other Islamic institutions under their First Amendment rights that guarantee freedom of religion, they have still faced objections from non-Muslim neighbors and often been required by law to adapt their cemeteries and mortuary practices in response. For example, while it is customary to bury Muslims without coffins, concerns from neighbors that doing so could pollute the water supply has often resulted in Muslim cemeteries being legally required to use either decomposable wood coffins or concrete vaults, inside of which some soil may be placed to preserve a sense of being in the earth. Some cemeteries have also been required to pay for regular groundwater monitoring because of neighbors' concerns about possible pollution from the loosely constrained corpses. Neighbors have also complained about Muslim cemeteries being eyesores and reducing their property values because of their grounds being fairly natural, with limited grave markers, and their digging of holes well in advance in preparation for needing to bury Muslims quickly upon death. In Atlanta, these kinds of complaints resulted in a Muslim cemetery being legally required to install an eight-foot-high wooden fence surrounding it and to agree to dig graves no more than 24 hours before filling them.

#### ALTERNATIVES TO BURIAL IN A MUSLIM CEMETERY

Despite these various options available to Muslim Americans for burial in an Islamic cemetery, many people have chosen to repatriate their deceased rather than leaving them to rest in the United States. Repatriation has been especially common among recent immigrants and those who came to the United States temporarily, for whom the majority of their family members remain in their country of origin. In the past, repatriating bodies was quite difficult to arrange and involved significant bureaucratic hassles, at least until the 1970s, after which companies began to specialize in the overseas transportation of bodies. Such firms have been employed frequently by West AFRICAN MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS to return the bodies of kin to their natal villages.

Many AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, especially those affiliated with the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), have not been buried in cemeteries or cemetery sections that are exclusively Muslim. This pattern was partly the result of racial and ethnic divisions among Muslim Americans in the 20th century.

It also reflected the desires on the part of some African-Americans Muslims to be buried alongside other black, sometimes non-Muslim family and community members. Longtime NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) and his son W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008) were both buried in Mount Glenwood cemetery in Glenwood, Illinois, the first cemetery in Chicago to bury African Americans, having been doing so since 1910. MALCOLM X (1925–65) was buried in Ferncliff cemetery, a nonsectarian cemetery in Hartsdale, New York, in which the lots of many famous Americans can be found.

#### CONCLUSION

For as long as Muslims have been in the United States, they have been carving out spaces in American soil for the placement of their deceased. In Muslim cemeteries and in cemetery sections, one can observe signs of American influence on Islamic customs, from the early ASSIMILATION of tombstones and monuments to the later acceptance of coffins and fences as mandated by law. Early burial sites attest to the historical presence of Muslim slaves and immigrants in sites in the South and throughout New England and the Midwest. Over time, the cemeteries illustrated a gradual and tempered emergence of a shared identity among Muslim Americans, who became increasingly likely to be buried alongside Muslims with different ancestries, clustered according to their religious identities, rather than their homelands or ethnicities.

Karen Smid

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#### chaplains

Muslim chaplaincy began informally in the United States in the 1940s, when members of the NATION OF ISLAM visited PRISONS to educate and provide support to the incarcerated. The demand for chaplains increased in the 1980s and 1990s with the changing DEMOGRAPHICS of the Muslim community, including an influx of new immigrants, maturation of second-generation YOUTH, and a steady stream of African-American converts in prisons. In addition, there was acute



need for pastoral care after the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, due to the increased vulnerability and visibility of Muslim Americans and the desire for non-Muslims to learn about Islam. The trend over time has been that the practice of Muslim chaplaincy is becoming more structured and formal.

Muslim-American chaplaincy was modeled on the tradition of Christian-American chaplaincy, a tradition in which people who could not attend a church due to illness, confinement, or distance from a house of worship were visited by an ordained clergyman or clergywoman instead. Some Muslim chaplains were imams, or “prayer leaders,” but many were lay leaders who had received Islamic training or professional credentials in chaplaincy or counseling. Although the term *chaplain* was Christian in origin, it became widely used to describe leaders of many faiths.

While chaplains played different roles in different settings, they generally led or organized prayer services, counseled individuals on spiritual and secular matters, interpreted and answered questions about Muslim RELIGIOUS LIFE, taught or gave lectures about Islam, assisted community members who wanted to convert to Islam, consoled and comforted the sick or grieving, and advocated for Muslims within the organizations they served. Since chaplaincy was not a vocation in Muslim-majority countries, many Muslim Americans, especially first-generation immigrants, were unaware of the role and duties of a chaplain.

Chaplains represented all aspects of the diverse Muslim community, though they were more often men than women because of the prohibition against women leading Friday congregational PRAYER. In addition, male chaplains may have been more suited to male-dominant environments such as the UNITED STATES MILITARY, prisons, and police forces. By 2005, there were a growing number of female chaplains, especially at women’s colleges and in other educational settings. Some institutions hired full-time chaplains to serve exclusively in that capacity. Others asked current employees to serve as volunteers in a special role, such as a professor acting as chaplain to a university. Still others had chaplains that were volunteers, contract employees, or part-time employees.

Chaplains (sometimes known as advisers) have developed in four key areas of American life—the military, HEALTH CARE, prisons, and EDUCATION—and less commonly in police forces and corporations. Many institutions, especially the military and prisons, had strict requirements for chaplains, requiring their employees to earn the equivalent of a master’s degree in divinity (M. Div.) or be ordained in their respective religious tradition.

Without a formal clergy or a codified religious training program in the United States, it was difficult for Muslims to meet these criteria. In 2000, under the leadership of reli-

gious studies professor and Muslim-American leader INGRID MATTSON, the Hartford Theological Seminary created the nation’s first accredited program in Islamic chaplaincy. Graduates of this program held key Muslim chaplain positions in all sectors of American society. As of 2008, other certificate programs were being developed at East-West University in Chicago and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California.

The first Muslim chaplain in the U.S. military joined the army in 1993. By 2007, there were 10 military Muslim chaplains and additional Muslim chaplain assistants. These chaplains served a population of Muslim military personnel and played a key role in educating non-Muslims about Islam, which was essential to military readiness in the war in Afghanistan that began in 2001 and the IRAQ WAR that began in 2003. The armed forces actively recruited military personnel and civilians to serve as paid, noncombatant Muslim chaplains.

Muslim chaplains in the military were a focal point for controversy. For example, JAMES YEE (1968– ) was a chaplain to GUANTÁNAMO BAY detention camp detainees and upon return to the mainland in 2003 was arrested and charged with espionage, adultery, and storing pornography. All charges were later dropped, and he received an honorable discharge. Shareda Hosein, an army reservist, applied to become the first female military Muslim chaplain but was rejected in 2005 due to Islam’s prohibition of women leading prayers in mixed congregations. She later became Muslim chaplain at Tufts University and then returned to the army to educate non-Muslims about Islam.

Muslim chaplains in hospitals and hospices have helped patients and their families in times of crisis and grief. Like other HEALTH CARE chaplains, Muslim chaplains have provided spiritual and emotional support for patients, grief counseling to families after death or trauma, and doctrinal and cultural guidance about illness and medical procedures. In addition, Muslim chaplains have educated medical staff about religious dietary restrictions, obligations for prayer, Islamic HOLIDAYS such as the month of fasting during Ramadan, and medical procedures that may be forbidden or culturally inappropriate. Chaplains have sometimes acted as linguistic and cultural translators.

In addition to patient care, hospital chaplains have often provided pastoral support to Muslim staff members. A few Muslim chaplains undertook the mandatory 1,600 hours of clinical pastoral education; the bulk of support was provided by religious or lay volunteers. In 2004, the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education, one of the largest health care chaplaincy organizations in the United States, created a task force to recruit Muslim students to join their chaplaincy training program.

By the beginning of the 21st century, approximately 300,000 to 400,000 inmates in America’s prisons and jails



were Muslim. The majority were African Americans, and two-thirds of them converted to Islam during incarceration. In 1984, the Federal Bureau of Prisons hired its first imam to serve as a full-time prison chaplain. Since then, the prison system has employed more Muslim chaplains than any other American institution. There had long been public ambivalence about Muslim chaplaincy in the prison system. Some claimed that chaplains fomented radicalism, while others believed that extremism was more likely to flourish among unsupervised inmates. In 1999, Aminah McCloud, an Islamic studies professor, and Frederick Thaufeer Al Deen, a longtime Muslim chaplain, published a seminal guide for Muslim prison chaplains, setting forth basic guidelines for the practice of Islam in prison that took into account both federal and state laws.

Muslim chaplaincy also became prevalent in educational establishments in the 1990s, especially in private and elite colleges on the East Coast. In 1999, Georgetown University hired Yahya Hendi as higher education's first full-time Muslim chaplain, and Brown University, Princeton University, Yale University, and Duke University followed suit. Many other campuses had part-time or volunteer chaplains who were faculty members, graduate students, local imams, or lay leaders. By 2010, about 30 universities had Muslim chaplains.

In the 20th century, Muslims were underserved at most American institutions. This was due to a combination of factors: ignorance about chaplaincy among the Muslim community, inadequate numbers of people pursuing careers in Muslim chaplaincy, and insufficient resources to hire Muslim chaplains. In addition, the ongoing suspicion, intolerance, and misunderstanding of Muslim chaplains and Islam limited the scope of the practice. This began to change in the first decade of the 21st century as awareness increased and resources became available.

Aly Kassam-Remtulla

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### Chappelle, Dave (1973– ) comedian and producer

Perhaps the most successful Muslim-American comic in history, Dave Chappelle took a different road to success than most in his profession. While many comedians use television as a stepping-stone toward the greater celebrity of film, Chappelle traveled in the other direction. Developing an impressive movie resume, he became a sensation with his Comedy Central TV show simply called *Chappelle's Show*. Such enormous success propelled him to a kind of fame from which Chappelle recoiled, prompting him to withdraw from public life to reassess his future.

An African American, Chappelle was born in WASHINGTON, D.C., on August 24, 1973, to Yvonne Reed and William David Chappelle. Chappelle's father taught at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio. His mother, who earned her master's of divinity and Ph.D. in African-American studies, founded what was among the first Ph.D. programs in black studies in the United States and was the first African-American woman ordained by the Unitarian Universalist Church. Though the Chappelle children grew up Christian, it was David's older brother, Sedar, who brought Islam into their circle after first joining the NATION OF ISLAM and then embracing a more Sunni strain of Islam. At some point during his adolescence, Chappelle also embraced Islam.

Chappelle attended Woodlin Elementary School in Silver Spring, Maryland, but when his mother moved into the city limits of Washington, D.C., he and his brother went to live with their father in Yellow Springs, where Chappelle would spend his middle school years. He returned to Washington again in the late 1980s for high school, first attending Eastern High School for one semester, then transferring to the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, where he specialized in theater. While at Ellington, at a mere 14 years of age, Chappelle did

his first stand-up performance, attended by his grandmother, mother, and brother. This began his high school night career of performing at local comedy clubs.

Claiming heavy early influence by Richard Pryor, Bill Cosby, and later by his friend Martin Lawrence, whom he credits with showing everybody that the path from Washington to Hollywood was possible, Chappelle moved to New York after graduating in 1991 to perform on the comedy circuit. This move would distinctly precipitate his ascendancy, as he was performing alongside other up-and-coming comics such as Ray Romano and Bill Bellamy. It was there that he met street performer Charlie Barnett, whom he credits with directly influencing his development as a comic.

Chappelle also connected with HIP-HOP mogul Russell Simmons and appeared frequently on *Def Comedy Jam* in 1992. By age 19, Chappelle had landed his first major film role as Ahchoo, the Muslim second in command to Robin Hood, in Mel Brooks's *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* (1993). He continued to play supporting roles in major movies, such as Eddie Murphy's *The Nutty Professor* (1996), *Con Air* (1997), *You've Got Mail* (1998), *Blue Streak* with Martin Lawrence (1999), and *Undercover Brother* (2002) with comedian Eddie Griffin. In 1998, he cowrote *Half Baked* with Neal Brennan and starred as the lead character, Thurgood Jenkins.

In his February 2006 interview with James Lipton on *Inside the Actor's Studio*, Chappelle recounted a story of his first attempt at his own television show in his mid-20s, which was based on his experience performing at Harlem's Apollo Theater as a young teenager and getting booed. Despite the obvious African-American context, Fox wanted to recast one of his characters as a white woman, someone with "universal appeal." Deciding that he could not do that, he quit. Unfortunately, this was also happening at the same time that his father was struggling with the effects of a stroke. Long before, his father had advised Chappelle when he entered show business that he needed to be prepared to name his "price," both literal and figurative: If it ever became too expensive than that price, then he should get out. Regretting that he had gone to Hollywood rather than to his father's bedside, Chappelle followed his father's early advice and decided that his creative independence was far more important than simply getting a show. A few months later, his father died, at which point he decided he was done with Hollywood. He bought a farm in Yellow Springs and moved in on New Year's Eve of 1999. Noticeably, he began to exert greater control over his own projects as producer.

In 2000, he returned to Washington's Lincoln Theater, where he performed and produced his first stand-up concert film, *Killin' Them Softly*, for Showtime. He had saved enough money so that if ever facing another network concern about "universal appeal," he could simply approach a different network. Eventually, after being rejected by HBO, he and Neal Brennan pitched *Chappelle's Show* to the fledgling cable net-

work Comedy Central, which picked it up. *Chappelle's Show* ran two full seasons and into a third, from 2003 to 2005. Chappelle was also the show's executive producer, enabling him to nurture his creative freedom. The show met with huge success, and the first season DVD sold more copies than any television show ever. During this high tide of success, he also performed and produced his second concert film, *For What It's Worth* (2004).

Guided by his father's insight about show business's high costs, Chappelle left the show in its third season, when his creative freedom seemed to be in question. In the context of being told that he was a genius and that what he was producing was truly his voice, he questioned these accolades, wondering if his sketches were "socially irresponsible," particularly with regard to some of the images of African Americans and poverty. Amid widespread media speculation questioning his mental stability and health, Chappelle, initially unaware of the rumors, granted interviews with Christopher Farley for *Time*, eventually with Oprah Winfrey for her show, and then with James Lipton for *Inside the Actor's Studio* to reveal that he had traveled to South Africa, where he stayed with a family friend, also a Muslim, to regroup himself. Speaking of his soul and his spirit in his 2005 *Time* interview with Farley, Chappelle explained that he had gone there in order to distance himself and gain perspective in a place where he was treated as an everyday person rather than as a celebrity—where he could "fill [his] spirit back up."

Although Chappelle never returned to the show, his career seemed unscathed by his decision to stay true to his own vision. He went on to produce *Block Party* (2005), a hip-hop concert movie filmed more as a documentary than as a typical hip-hop video. He also performed in numerous episodes of *Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry* between 2002 and 2005. *Jet* magazine reported his record six-hour, seven-minute stand-up performance at the Laugh Factory in L.A. in the spring of 2007. That same year, Chappelle worked with Unity Productions Foundation's Michael Wolfe and Alex Kronemer as executive producers of the stand-up comedy movie *Allah Made Me Funny—The Official Muslim Comedy Tour*, featuring three Muslim comics, Preacher Moss, Azhar Usman, and Mohammed Amer.

Whatever his future, Chappelle's contributions to American comedy have already been significant. Russell Simmons's groundbreaking *Def Comedy Jam* played a major role in exploding open the field of comedy for African-American comics, many of whom, in the tradition of Richard Pryor, developed routines based on their observations of race-based cultural differences. Chappelle's humor, however, moved beyond mere observation into satirical commentary. Though his comedy was grounded primarily in his own experiences and focused on race, he appealed to a broad, cross-racial hip-hop generation. His cult classic movie, *Half Baked*,

played a large role in expanding his audience well beyond the borders of black communities.

Known most for his scatological humor, “blue” comedy, marijuana smoking, and savvy racial commentary, Chappelle, not surprisingly, has remained relatively quiet about his life as a Muslim. As he told *Time* magazine in 2005, he did not want “people to associate [him] and [his] flaws with this beautiful thing. And [he] believe[s] it is a beautiful religion if you learn it the right way.”

Kimberly A. Yates

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**charity** See PHILANTHROPY.

## Chicago, Illinois

Chicago has had a long-standing and important place in the history of Muslim Americans. From the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religions until the present, Chicago has been home to various strands of Islamic teachings, Muslim cultural elements, and Muslim immigrants. The COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893 featured exhibits sponsored by the Ottoman caliph and nations such as Egypt, Persia, Algeria, and Sudan, while the affiliated Parliament of Religions hosted presentations on Islam by a recent American convert, ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB (1846–1916). Chicago subsequently played a central role in the development of African-American Islamic movements, and that population, together with successive waves of immigrants from the Muslim world and their descendants, has reached an estimated 400,000 Muslims in the greater Chicago area, according to the Council for Islamic Organizations.

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS

Chicago has figured prominently in Islam’s appeal to African Americans since 1921, the year Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, the first missionary to the United States from the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, moved to the city. Coming from what is today Pakistan, Sadiq established the first Ahmadi mosque in the nation at 4448 S. Wabash Avenue, and Chicago served

as the movement’s national headquarters until 1950. Four Ahmadi mosques can be found in the region, two predominantly African American and two predominantly Indo-Pakistani.

In 1925, NOBLE DREW ALI established the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE in Chicago and set up a center, called the Unity Hall, in the South Loop area in 1926. In 1928, he held a national convention in Chicago. Although his organization split into factions after his death in 1929, three Moorish Science Temple mosques still function in the city in the 21st century.

The Lost Found Nation of Islam in the Wilderness of America (later known as the NATION OF ISLAM) is a movement that traces its inspiration to the teachings of the mysterious founder, W. D. FARD, whose ethnicity is still disputed and who disappeared in 1934. His successor, the “Messenger,” ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, moved the movement’s headquarters from Detroit to Chicago’s South Side. During the 1930s, Muhammad took up residence in a mansion known as “The Palace” in the upscale Kenwood neighborhood.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Elijah Muhammad’s Chicago-based organization represented the face of Islam to the broader American public. He taught moral uplift to a disenfranchised community, a synthesis of Christian and Islamic terms and concepts mixed with middle-class American values and a discourse of self-help and positive thinking. Despite government suspicion and harassment, his followers established successful businesses and organized preaching in the prison system as well as to members of the black community.

After Elijah Muhammad’s death in 1975, his son W. D. MOHAMMED “mainstreamed” most followers of the Nation of Islam, who became Sunni in faith and practice. The group maintained a distinct identity through successive identifications as “Bilalians,” members of the “American Muslim Mission,” the “American Society of Muslims,” and, since 2003, the “Mosque Cares.”

A smaller number of NATION OF ISLAM ministers and members clung to the earlier teachings of the movement perpetuated by LOUIS FARRAKHAN, who was able to acquire the main center, Maryam Mosque, on the South Side as well as the mansion, or “Palace,” of Elijah Muhammad. Farrakhan remained a controversial figure for many Americans, denouncing U.S. government policies and racial injustice, receiving support from Libya, organizing the MILLION MAN MARCH of African-American males on WASHINGTON, D.C. in 1995, and at times seeming to move closer to Sunni Islam.

At the beginning of the 21st century, more than 20 African-American mosques could be found locally, all but two within the Chicago city limits. The AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM population of Chicago was concentrated in areas such as Hazelcrest, Harvey, Calumet City, and Homewood, and estimates have varied widely: in 2004, from 200,000 to





The Sears Tower (now known as the Willis Tower), built in Chicago in 1969 and still the tallest building in the United States, was designed by Pakistani-American architect Fazlur Rahman Khan. *(Katherine Welles/Shutterstock)*



less than 100,000, a minority of whom actively participate in an organized Muslim community.

### IMMIGRANT MUSLIMS

Immigrant Muslims from all parts of the Muslim world have settled in Chicago in successive waves in search of economic opportunity and to escape political crises. Chicago has also been the preferred destination for the annual convention of the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA convention that occurs over the Labor Day weekend and was attended by more than 30,000 American Muslims in 2007.

Bosnian Muslims were early leaders in the establishment of Chicago's Muslim community. In 1906, they established the Benevolent Society of Illinois. As the population increased in the early 1950s, the community invited Sheikh Kamil Avdich (1914–79), a prominent Muslim scholar, to become the first permanent imam, or "leader." Under Imam Kamil's direction, a mosque was opened on Halsted Street in 1957. In 1968, the organization's name became the Bosnian American Cultural Association, and in the early 1970s, it purchased land in Northbrook to build a larger mosque and cultural center. The Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago has remained an important center for Muslim religious activity, serving Bosnian and non-Bosnian Muslims in metropolitan Chicago. As a result of the BOSNIAN WAR 1992, Chicago became the most popular U.S. destination for Bosnian refugees, and according to community estimates, an estimated 40,000 Bosnians had taken up residence in the city by 2002. This new Bosnian community settled in the northern part of the city, between Lawrence and Howard Streets and from Clark to Lake Michigan. There were four Bosnian mosques in the greater Chicago area by 2008.

By 2004, the Arab-American population of metropolitan Chicago may have numbered 100,000 persons, 70 percent of whom were Muslim. Most of these were under age 30 and born in the United States.

The history of ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS in Chicago dates to the Columbian Exposition of 1893, when Chicago's South Side became home to an enclave of Syrian traders and restaurateurs. Muslims from Palestine began settling in Chicago in the early 1900s. Mostly entrepreneurs, they occupied an area along the edge of the South Side's African-American community by the late 1940s. Palestinian shopkeepers often lived in the African-American communities in which they worked. After WORLD WAR II, when Palestinian family migration began, they moved to white neighborhoods on the Southwest Side. Political turmoil in the decades following the creation of Israel in 1948 brought more Palestinian Muslims to Chicago, while many non-Palestinian-Arab Muslims began arriving in the mid-1950s.

The first local Arab mosque, later known as the Mosque Foundation, was established in 1954. It opened a new facil-

ity in southwest suburban Bridgeview in 1982, later adding two state-accredited schools for Muslim children. According to scholar Louise Cainkar, Friday PRAYER attendance at the Bridgeview mosque increased from 75 in 1982, to 800 in 1993, to nearly 2,000 in 2004. This was due not only to increased immigration and population but also to the global Islamic REVIVALISM among Muslims. By the end of the 20th century, Arab Muslims, including Egyptians, Iraqi refugees, Moroccans, and Yemenis, were attending various mosques throughout the metropolitan region, particularly on the city's North Side and in some suburbs.

Immigrant Muslims from India and (after 1947) Pakistan swelled the ranks of Chicago Muslims, especially after the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965. Muslim immigrants from Hyderabad, India, constituted a significant element of this population. A group of recent college graduates and new professionals of primarily South Asian background decided to form the Muslim Community Center (MCC) in 1969 after initially meeting at local campuses and interacting with other local Islamic centers. A facility in Humbolt Park was purchased in 1972, and the community then relocated to a converted movie theater in Albany Park, a diverse North Side neighborhood, in 1982. In 1993, the MCC purchased 1,500 burial lots for Muslims in Rosehill Cemetery. While the MCC congregation remained quite diverse, the board and leadership tended to be South Asian. In 2006, a growing Bangladeshi community established a mosque in Evanston, just north of Chicago.

As in a number of other American cities, the followers of Turkish preacher Fethullah Gülen (ca. 1938– ) have been developing a presence in Chicago since the late 1990s. They sponsored interfaith and dialogue events through the Niagara Foundation, established in 2002 and housed in a downtown office building. Educational activities included a Turkish-American school, the Chicago Science Academy, and involvement in two local charter schools. A large warehouse in Mount Prospect was renovated in 2005 to serve as a Turkish-American center.

### SECTARIAN AND INTERPRETIVE DIVERSITY

Various branches of Shi'ism also became well-established in Chicago, and Twelver SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICANS formed an association in 1972. A large Ithna Ashari Center (the Twelvers or Ithna Asharis, are the majority of Shi'a Muslims) called MASOM, the Midwest Association of Shi'a Organized Muslims, opened on Lawrence Avenue in Albany Park in 2001. In 1993, the Husaini Association-Islamic Education Center was established in Glendale Heights. One source estimated Chicago's Shi'a community at 15,000 in 2004.

ISMA'ILI MUSLIM AMERICANS, who disagree with Twelver Shi'a about which descendants of the prophet Muhammad should lead the Muslim community, have also

created viable Islamic institutions in greater Chicago. One branch of the Isma'ili Shi'a, the DAUDI BOHRAS, constructed a large and modern facility in Hinsdale in 1990. The Nizari Isma'ilis, who follow the leadership of the AGA KHAN, established their first meeting hall, or *JAMAATKHANA*, downtown around 1960 and moved to a center on Rosemont Avenue and Broadway on the North Side in 1983. Construction of a major Isma'ili center in Glenview, an affluent northern suburb, was undertaken in 2007.

The Mahdawiyya, a South Asian sectarian movement that believes that Sayyid Muhammad Jaunpuri (?–1505) was the promised messianic leader of Islamic tradition, established a storefront Mahdavi Center located on Western Avenue just north of Devon Avenue.

The high concentration of South Asian Muslims in the area led to some replication of interpretive divisions imported from the Indian subcontinent. For example, several mosques identifiable as predominantly TABLIGHI JAMA'AT, a movement of traditional piety established by Muhammad Ilyas in India in the 1920s, have been located near Devon Avenue. Ahl e-Sunna (Barelvi) congregations also clustered in this area, in several cases occupying the basements of apartment buildings owned and inhabited by Muslim South Asians. The Barelvis are the majority of Muslim South Asians, considered to follow "popular" interpretations and ritual, including veneration of the Prophet and the Sufi saints. Meanwhile, the Islamic Circle of North America center on California Avenue just south of Devon has promoted a more political vision of Islam influenced by the Jamaat-i Islami movement.

### SUFI ORDERS

Muslim followers of SUFISM have most likely dotted Chicago's Islamic landscape for some time, although there is no substantial body of research on their presence. Some Chicago area Sufi groups have been "transplants" from the Muslim world. For example, the Chishti Nizami order from South Asia was represented by the Hyderabad sheikh and healer Muhammad Afzaluddin Nizami. Monthly sessions of *DHIKR*, "recitations of pious litanies," were convened at a private home, and *Urs*, or "commemorations of departed saints," would be held in banquet halls on Devon Avenue accompanied by speeches and on occasion musical sessions. A South-Asian Qadiri Sufi group convened weekly meetings at the Elmdale mosque.

Other Islamic Sufi orders have attracted both immigrant and American followers, such as the Iranian Nimatullahis, the Turkish Helveti-Jerrahis, and the NAQSHBANDI SUFI ORDER, headed in the United States by sheikh MUHAMMAD HISHAM KABBANI. The Northbrook Islamic Center has hosted Naqshbandi sessions, perhaps due to a shared Ottoman heritage. At one time, the Naqshbandis seemed to be achieving a multiethnic following in Chicago, but this decreased during the late 1990s.

### OTHER MUSLIM ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to mosques and Islamic centers, Chicago's Muslims have participated in a range of ethnic, cultural, advocacy, educational, and service organizations. ISLAMIC SCHOOLS have long been a part of Muslim-American life in Chicago. In the 1930s, the Nation of Islam created the University of Islam in South Chicago. This full-time elementary and secondary school, which opened its doors to Muslim and non-Muslim African-American children, taught basic subjects such as math and reading, but it also emphasized black history, following what today would be called an Afrocentric curriculum that celebrated historical black achievements. In addition, the school offered Arabic language, sometimes by employing immigrant Muslims such as Palestinian Jamil Diab, and taught the ethics and theology of Elijah Muhammad, the leader of the Nation of Islam.

Only after the Immigration Act of 1965 took effect did immigrant Muslims begin to establish Islamic parochial schools. By 2007, there were at least six full-time schools serving various communities. Most were founded around 1990, marking the emergence of a second or in some cases a third generation of Muslim Americans in Chicago. The Universal and Aqsa Schools, which were established in Bridgeview in 1990, served mainly Arab Americans, while South Asian students have generally attended the Islamic Foundation, established in Villa Park in 1988; the Muslim Educational Center, established in Morton Grove in 1990; the College Preparatory School of America, established in Lombard in 1991; and the Averroes Academy, established in Glenview in 1999. The orientation of these schools has generally been socially conservative, and the curriculum has conformed to state regulations and encouraged positive civic engagement while allowing interaction with other communities. Many other centers offered Islamic Sunday schools, some level of primary classes, or day care programs.

Beginning in the 1990s, QUR'AN memorization academies and Islamic studies curricula for children and youth grew in popularity, especially among South Asian Muslims. In addition to several small academies located near Devon Avenue or in the suburbs, the largest of these schools, sometimes called madrasas, was established by a Deoband-trained scholar, Maulana M. Abdullah Saleem, in 1989 in Elgin, Illinois. Called the Institute of Islamic Education, it has offered a traditional Islamic curriculum in gender-segregated classes since 2000. Muslim-affiliated institutions of higher education in Chicago have included the American Islamic College, inaugurated with support from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the Muslim World League in 1981; and the East-West University, where a primarily non-Muslim student body has studied practical, career-oriented fields since 1979.

A number of Muslim publishers and bookstores have been located on the North Side of the city. These include the Iqra Educational Foundation just north of the city in Skokie,

Illinois, directed by Drs. Abid Ullah and Tasneema Ghazi, which has specialized in curricular materials for Islamic schools; Kazi Publications, a publisher and mail-order store operated by Liaquat Ali; and Sound Vision, a producer of audiovisual materials with an associated bookstore operated by Abdul Malik Mujahid.

In addition, several national Muslim organizations, such as the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA) and the Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA), are headquartered in the Chicago area.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Central Eid Committee of Chicago, which attempted to coordinate the various Muslim communities in the celebration of important Muslim holidays, organized prayer observances that were often held at the huge McCormick Place Convention Center on the South Side and later at the Rosemount Convention Center near O'Hare Airport. In 1992, the Chicago Muslim community came together under the newly formed Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago and in 2007 claimed a membership of more than 50 Muslim organizations representing both the African-American and immigrant communities.

As the children of Muslim immigrants either born or raised in the United States sought their own Muslim-American identities, new types of organizations emerged. These included the Council of American Muslim Professionals (CAMP, established in 1994), the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN, established in 1996), the Interfaith Youth Core (established in 1998), the Nawawi Foundation (established in 2000), and American Muslims for Activism and Learning (AMAL, established in 2003).

CAMP is a networking organization that seeks to provide a forum for education and social service. IMAN originally dedicated itself to serving the needs of Palestinians in the Chicago Lawn area but soon expanded to a multipurpose organization covering the South Side of Chicago. IMAN, directed by Rami Nashahibi, instituted a large biennial fair called "Takin' It to the Streets" along with tutoring and other forms of support to disadvantaged or immigrant communities, whether Arab Muslim, African American, or Latina/o.

The Interfaith Youth Core was inaugurated by an Isma'ili Muslim, Eboo (Ibrahim) Patel in 1998 and began its activities in Chicago in 2002 to encourage youths to join in service projects while sharing their faith commitments through interfaith dialogue. The Nawawi Foundation, a coalition of young Muslim professionals who have supported a style of Islamic learning that attempts to integrate classical Islamic studies with contemporary American thought, appointed Umar Faruq Abdullah as their scholar-in-residence. AMAL, organized by supporters of progressive Islamic interpretations across ethnic lines, has sponsored lectures and encouraged activism for good causes that integrate and represent Islam positively in an American context.

## AFTER 9/11

Muslims of Chicago reported both negative and positive experiences after the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. The South Asian immigrant Muslim community moved toward more conservative interpretations and practices, such as greater emphasis on gender segregation in mosques and support for a leadership that endorsed traditional views and practices. At the same time, Chicago Muslims as a whole have become more politically conscious and willing to organize and seek alliances with groups outside the community. Still, since 9/11, the community has been pervaded by a climate of fear in the face of surveillance measures and interference by government authorities that some perceive as a "divide and conquer" strategy implemented against Muslims.

Nevertheless, the history of Muslim Americans in Chicago suggests that, at least at the local level, Muslim Americans are already an irreplaceable part of the city. Chicago has been traditionally known as a "city of neighborhoods" and one in which local politicians have courted ethnic voters, thus permitting Muslims to achieve high positions and recognition within the city, write columns in the local newspapers, and be involved in a range of lobbying activities. Muslims in Chicago achieved increasingly prominent positions in media, education, sports, medicine, and other industries despite the discrimination against them. By the 21st century, it became impossible to tell the story of Chicago without including the voices of Muslim Americans.

Marcia Hermansen

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### A Christian Missionary among Muslim Americans in Chicago (1920)

*In 1920, the Armenian-American Christian missionary M. M. Aijian saw Muslim Americans as largely single immigrant men who lived in filthy conditions, often with their girlfriends, and drank alcohol—in violation of U.S. law that prohibited the consumption of liquor. For Aijian, the director of Mohammedan Work at the Chicago Tract Society, this made Muslim Americans ideal candidates for conversion to Christianity. He called on fellow Christians to contribute funds toward the distribution of free Bibles and other religious literature among Muslim Americans. Aijian was worried that Muslim immigrants would return home with images of the United States as a sinful place where people drank, fornicated, gawked at immodestly clad women, and abused the labor of uneducated immigrants. He was keen to correct that image by asking other Christians to show the more conservative and compassionate face of American life. In addition to providing an example of evangelical Christian interest in converting Muslim Americans, Aijian's article, which appeared in an American-based periodical, The Moslem World, gave rare insights into the lives of some Muslim men in Chicago around 1920.*



In speaking of the open door for Christian Missions, someone said: "Formerly we prayed for an *open door* and now God has given us a *swing-ing door*." This is true in regard to the Moslems. American Christians are carrying the Gospel to them and they in turn are coming in large numbers to America.

They have come from India, Persia, Turkey, Palestine, Syria, Macedonia, Albania and Arabia. Upon informing a lady of the fact that there are Mohammedans [an archaic Western term for Muslims] in America, she said with some indignation: "They have no business to be here." This may be true, but it does not change the situation one particle; they are with us just the same.

At this time it is not possible to give, even approximately, the number of Moslems in North America. To an inquiry addressed to the Census Bureau at Washington, we have received the following answer, in part: "There have been various efforts to learn the number of Mohammedans in the United States, but so far without any satisfactory result. Of course there are Mohammedans from North India, as well as from Arabia and Turkey." As a result of my personal investigation, I can say that without doubt the number will reach up into the thousands.

They are scattered all over the country, but located principally in the industrial centers of the East and the Middle West. The following list of cities will give a more definite idea as to where they are living: Milwaukee, Wis., Chicago, Ill., Pittsburgh, Pa., Cleveland and Akron, Ohio, New York City, Philadelphia, Pa., Baltimore, Md., Boston and Worcester, Mass., and in many smaller cities.

They have a Turkish paper "Sedai Vatar" (The Call of the Fatherland), and two Arabic papers, "El-Beyan" (The News) and "Kawkab" (The Star), all published in New York.

They are almost entirely single men, or married men who have left their families behind for the time being, and as a rule they are employed in doing the heavy and dirty work in tanneries, foundries, and on the railroads.

Wherever it is possible, there is the tendency to congregate in such sections of American cities as will best keep them in constant remembrance of the unclean and unsanitary conditions of their native lands. And, naturally, those of the same language and country group together. For example, the Chicago Mohammedans are divided into two groups, viz: Arabic and Turkish, the former on the South Side and the latter on the North. The Turkish group is subdivided into the Balkan, Turk proper and Kurdish, each having its own *social center* in coffee-houses. These are frequently in connection with boarding and lodging houses, restaurants, pool-rooms, and, I am exceedingly sorry to say, sometimes with gambling-dens and vice resorts. I shall never forget one Sunday afternoon my visit to a Turkish café, where a big group of them were sitting around a long table, while the Turkish band was playing and the rest of the men were singing, or rather screaming out at the top of their voices, Turkish love-songs. And these followers of Mohammed had already emptied more than one case of beer, and, as I sat there watching, the



café-keeper ran across the street and brought in another case of beer from a saloon. After describing the incident to a surprised friend he exclaimed: "Why do the authorities in Chicago allow such a thing?" However, it should be more to the point if he should ask: "Do the authorities know it?"

Doubtless by many they are considered "undesirable foreigners," to others they are "good stuff to hitch up in heavy and dirty jobs with not so much pay"; but for Christians they are here in answer to their prayer for an open door," and I hope this brief article on this most neglected people will be considered as a modest effort to arouse the attention of the Christian public for further and more able handling of the problem.

First of all, let us bear in mind that our Mohammedan neighbors of today will become more or less influential leaders in their own country sooner or later. The other day I asked a bright looking Syrian (Arabic speaking) Mohammedan if he had anybody living at home and if he was planning to return there. His eyes began to shine and smiling he answered: "Oh, yes, me got father, mother, brother and sister. Me go back soon when my brother-in-law go." And then he added: "All go, many, many in New York waiting to go away." Doubtless many will leave this country at the first opportunity. And they'll be travelers, these wonderful future leaders. Imagine for a minute one of them sitting at the front of his tent or cottage, the whole town for his audience, and he will have no trouble in getting the crowd, as some of our missionaries have. They will ask him one thousand and one questions. Is he not an authority? Did he not just return from Kafirs (Infidel's) country? What he does not know of America is not worth knowing, and he will tell them *all he saw in America*. Someone may say, "What better service can they render to our missionaries, if they tell to their people all they saw in Christian America"?

If possible, in the second place, I would like to save my readers from the above mentioned illusion, for he will *tell all he saw* in Christian America; but for example, how will a worshipper in a "swell" Lake Shore Drive church in Chicago like it if that Mohammedan boy goes back and tells all he saw in America, as he found [poor living] conditions on 18th and South State Streets, or at the junction of Halstead Street and Milwaukee and Grand Avenues? For all that he saw in America year after year was in that section of the city, where he was doomed to live.

I remember once asking an elderly man, who came from Turkey, although not a Mohammedan, "How do you like America?"

"Not at all," he answered.

"Why?" I asked, "Are you out of work, or what is the trouble?"

"Oh, no," he answered, "I have good work, making good money too. But you know judging from what I heard from American missionaries, I thought America was Paradise, but when I walk up and down the avenues (Second and Third Avenues, in New York City), and see the half-dressed painted creatures—oh—well and other things—well, I guess, I'll go back."

Poor fellow, that was his America, *he worked there, he lived there, he walked up and down the avenues there*, on the East Side in New York. That is what he saw.

Let me say it frankly, although the limited space allowed for this paper will not let me elaborate and substantiate every statement I make, that he sees in America just the things that a Christian American would be ashamed to show to a foreigner. Besides the coffee-house which is his self-made social center, he comes in contact only (and I am writing of the average Moslem; there may be very few exceptions to this unpleasant fact) with that aspect of American life which by common consent is considered anything but wholesome, decent or Christian. He gets acquainted with the saloons and the cheapest kind of burlesque, vaudeville and moving-picture shows. In a word he recognizes in the freedom of the country a chance for self-indulgence and satisfaction of his passions, unchecked.

One day an elderly Moslem with whom I was talking admitted in answer to a question, that almost every young man that he knew had a girl living with him. The street life in the so-called "downtown" sections of the big American cities with all its undesirable aspects will be the only America most of the Mohammedans see of this country, and that is what he will tell when they go back over there, where Christian Americans send their missionaries, spending thousands of dollars every year.

The last sentence leads me to the third point of this problem, namely, the awful neglect. I have failed, so far, in all my efforts to find a single agency having the social, moral, especially the spiritual welfare of the Moslems at heart, trying to uplift them. Why is this neglect? Is it because

they do not count in millions and no denomination can see a denominational advantage in trying to do home-missionary work for them? Or is it the difficulty of the task? I do not know. But I do know, and the fact remains just the same, that they are neglected, and our next-door neighbors are living in the shadow of the Crescent in this country where the Cross is supposed to be triumphant. One Moslem brought out of that darkness to the glorious Light of the face of the Son of God may be a mighty instrument for the redemption of his own people. Here is our duty and also our opportunity.

We can approach the Mohammedans in America with literature. The ordinary pamphlets prepared for the careless or nominal Christians are absolutely unintelligible for the Mohammedan. Theological terms and statements mean nothing to him. Consequently it must be good Christian literature prepared for them definitely. The average Mohammedan is not crowded with reading material. Consequently when he gets hold of some book or pamphlet he is liable to read it more carefully. The other day I went out to visit them (the Arabic-speaking Moslems). I had some Nile Press literature with me, and it went like "hot cakes." One fellow wanted one of each kind. I asked someone else, if he wanted to have a booklet to read. He answered, "Why sure. Me read lots. Come in and I show you my books. I got lots." We went in and he brought out the whole library in a small bundle, all Arabic, one war book, a few booklets on different subjects, and a small copy of the Koran tied up with a string. I asked him if he read the Bible, and he said, No, he wanted to read it, but did not have one. I think it will be money well invested if some fund could be created that will furnish every Moslem in this country with a Bible, not a cheap one, but well-bound and attractive, so that he can take it with him if he goes back to his own people. For Turkish-speaking Moslems we are preparing some literature which will be available very shortly.

The second method, and possibly the best one, is personal contact. If approached in the right way, the evangelist will find an open door to preach and teach. The writer has found some splendid openings to preach the Gospel to Moslems even under [Ottoman Empire leader] Abdul Hamid's regime in Turkey. Start on the common ground, because there are many things in common between a Mohammedan and Christian: for instance,

the Unity of God, His might, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Greatness, Sin, and his consequences, God's hatred of sin. A pet method of discussion for me was to bring the Moslem to the point where he would realize that he is a helpless sinner in need of some kind of power to make him victorious over sin, and I often used to close with a personal testimony on the way of Redemption. I have yet to find the failure of this sympathetic and convincing method of approach.

A second line of thought which I often have followed with the Moslems in America is that of comparison and contrast. Unfortunately I have an apt starting-point for this peculiar method. Some years ago my own parents were butchered by the Mohammedans, and after telling them in detail the awful way the whole group of eighty Armenians were treated, my parents included, I often asked them what would they do if they were in my position. Of course, they curse and swear, and ask about revenge on the murderers. And I turn round and tell them what Christ did on the Cross, and how He taught me, His follower, to walk in His footsteps and gave me grace and power to do so. They do not fail to see the contrast between Christ and Mohammed.

Our approach in any way must be sympathetic, serious and a united one. A denominational propaganda, I believe is doomed to fail, as sometimes it deserves.



Source: M. M. Aijian. "The Mohammedans in the United States." *Moslem World* 10 (1920): 130-135.

**Chicago World's Fair of 1893** See COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893.

### children's literature

Since the 1980s, the number of Muslim children's books in the United States has increased markedly. This proliferation stands in contrast to declining interest in multicultural children's books reflected in the Newbery Awards, the most prominent award given by the American Library Association to chapter books, or books written for school-age children. Although the Newbery was regularly given to multicultural books during the Civil Rights era in the 1960s, few have earned it since 1979. In general, only 10 percent of children's books depicted the lives of minority populations in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

In part, the success of Muslim children's books has been due to a developing infrastructure that has supported them. By 2009, there were 400 to 500 part-time and full-time ISLAMIC SCHOOLS in the United States. Islamic publishers such as Kazi, Iqra, Amana, the Islamic Foundation, and Goodword began issuing titles that appealed to Muslim families as well as to librarians, teachers, and parents interested in understanding different faiths. The Islamic Foundation of North America offered online resources and book reviews as part of a literature-based curriculum designed for the study of Islam and Arabic in full-time parochial schools, in weekend classes, and for homeschoolers. Despite these advances, readers and booksellers noted that the sales of Muslim-American children's books were still surprisingly small. In part, the low sales figures reflected the fact that this infrastructure relied on small presses.

By contrast, children's books on Muslim topics that reach a larger audience have often had non-Muslim authors. In order to promote interest in Muslim topics from Muslims and non-Muslims alike, the Middle East Outreach Council began offering a book award in 1999 that recognizes "quality books for children and young adults that contribute meaningfully to an understanding of the Middle East and its component societies and cultures." The al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, spurred larger publishers to produce more books for non-Muslims curious about the religious practices of their Muslim neighbors.

Most of these children's books that represent Muslim cultures were picture books, frequently presenting fantastic or medieval settings. For example, multiple versions of *The Arabian Nights*—a collection of ancient folktales and stories—appeared, including Eric A. Kimmel's *The Tale of Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp* (1996) and Walter McVitty's *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* (1989). Other books celebrated medieval Islamic civilization, especially its achievements in engineering and science. For example, Caldecott Award-winner David Macauley, author of several books on medieval buildings, detailed the cultural importance of Muslim religious architecture in *Mosque* (2003). Many of these books attempted to correct the negative stereotypes that characterized American understandings of Muslim culture in the past by stressing the achievements of Islamic civilizations. James Rumford's *Traveling Man: The Journey of Ibn Battuta, 1325–1354* (2001) highlights the adventures of a Moroccan who challenged accepted notions that the world was flat and journeyed across much of the world in the 14th century. Diane Stanley, author of *Saladin: Noble Prince of Islam* (2002), uses a sympathetic warrior to give a fuller sense of the Crusades to an audience who most frequently hears about these medieval religious wars from a Christian point of view.

Muslim-American children's books have also presented religious practices and holidays to a non-Muslim audience. For example, both National Geographic and PowerKids Press

have published informational books on Muslim holidays as part of their series on holidays of different religions. Laid out in magazine-style formats, these books outline the beliefs, rituals, customs, and even recipes associated with celebrations such as Ramadan. The books carefully detail the ways that Muslims celebrate in different parts of the world.

In addition to the nonfiction treatments of these holidays, many fictional stories highlight children's roles in them. Asma Mobin-Uddin's *The Best Eid Ever* (2007) and Mary Matthews's *Magid Fasts for Ramadan* (1996), for example, use these holidays to promote religious and familial values. *The Best Eid Ever* emphasizes the importance of charity as Aneesha anonymously gives her new Eid clothes to two young refugees of a nameless war. *Magid* likewise uses the holiday to teach a lesson about respecting parents. Magid, a young Egyptian boy, wants so badly to observe the fast that he disobeys his parents' wishes. The picture book balances the desire to be an observant Muslim against being an obedient son. Magid's parents strike a compromise that allows him to become part of his religious community without growing up too quickly.

Accompanied by glossaries and explanatory notes, both of these books address audiences of non-Muslims who are interested in the holidays and values of Muslims. Yet because these books are expected to represent Muslim customs to non-Muslims, they also raise questions about the authenticity of their perspectives. *Magid*, which was written by a non-Muslim, drew mixed reviews from Muslims, who disagreed about how respectfully the book treated Muslim parents and how accurately it showed dietary customs. While some Muslims have objected when religious and familial values are treated disrespectfully, non-Muslims have criticized aspects of Islam that are addressed too reverentially. For example, *New York Times* reviewer Nicolas Kristof faulted Demi's *Muhammad* (2003) for treating religious beliefs (for example, the QUR'AN is the infallible word of God) as facts.

Some young adult books have also played on the Western STEREOTYPE that Muslim cultures oppress women. Suzanne Fisher Staples's *Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind* (1989), a Newbery Honor Book, tells the story of a young, strong-willed Pakistani girl who needs to abandon her boyish interests and submit to an arranged marriage to protect her sister. Its sequel, *Haveli* (1993), describes Shabanu's efforts to negotiate the complexities of her husband's polygamous household and protect a friend from an arranged marriage to the villain of the first book. Narrated from Shabanu's point of view, both books critique Muslim culture as denigrating to women, who, despite their strong characters, cannot escape the roles it assigns them. These books present the West as offering egalitarian roles for women, as when Omar, Shabanu's true love, promises "never again to regard women in the old way" following his education at an American university.

Canadian writer Deborah Ellis's *Breadwinner* trilogy (2001–04), winner of the Jane Addams Children's Book Award for advancing peace and social equality, follows an Afghan girl who is kept from attending school, visiting the market, or playing in the streets by the Taliban regime. After the arrest of her father, she disguises herself as a boy to become the family breadwinner and later to search for her mother and siblings, who go missing when the Taliban attack the city of Mazar-e-Sharif. Throughout this series, girls disguise themselves as boys and in doing so call attention to the repressive treatment of women by the Taliban. As with Staples's books, Westerners are often presented as models of progressive gender roles.

Other politically charged stories often emphasize how children are better able to reconcile their differences than adults. For example, a small genre shows Palestinian and Israeli children finding common ground, sometimes literally. In Deborah da Costa's *Snow in Jerusalem* (2001), a Muslim and a Jewish boy clash after discovering that they have each been caring for the same stray cat. Finding that the cat has had kittens, however, they each take two cats home. Daniella Carmi's *Samir and Yonatan* (2002) follows a Palestinian boy who must seek medical care in a Jewish hospital in the Occupied Territories, where he encounters children with many different cultural backgrounds. The novel, which earned an honorable mention from UNESCO for Children's and Young People's Literature in Service of Tolerance, describes how these children support one another during their treatments.

Overall, most children's books that depict Muslims or Islam in the late 20th and early 21st centuries taught some sort of lesson, whether religious, ethical, or historical. Some of these stories have begun to offer more complex images of Muslims than the literally cartoonish images of exotic and barbaric Arabs in Disney's *Aladdin* (1992). As a sign of how much things have changed, *Persepolis* (2003), the best-selling graphic novel by Marjane Satrapi and its sequel, *Embroideries* (2006), graphically present Iran with simple backgrounds that could be found anywhere, while depicting Italy, Spain, and Austria as exotic places complete with flying carpets. Books such as these actively present diverse Muslim identities while challenging and even reversing stereotypes.

Stephen Wolcott

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### Imam Vehby Isma'il

#### "Our Prophet, Muhammad" (1959)

One of the earliest examples of Muslim-American children's literature, "Our Prophet, Muhammad," was published in 1959. Its author was Imam Vehby Isma'il, leader of the Albanian American Moslem Society in Detroit. Isma'il was an Albanian who had received his seminary training at al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. After being invited to lead Detroit's Albanian-American mosque in 1949, Isma'il performed the normal functions of a religious sheikh. He conducted weddings and funerals, led the prayers to mark the commemoration of the two major eids, or "holidays," and gave the Friday sermon. He also edited a bilingual Albanian-English journal, *Albanian Moslem Life*. In the story below, which appeared on the youth pages of his journal, Isma'il fondly remembers a meeting with a friend and that man's daughter. The story



*clearly expresses a longing for the "old country" while also communicating the importance of passing on Islamic religious traditions to the first generation of Albanians born in the United States.*



Fatima was the only daughter of Hasan and Nadira.

Nadira had graduated from girls' high school in Scutari, Albania. Later she became a nurse. She worked in the largest hospital in Tirana, the capital of Albania.

Hasan had finished his high school studies in General Medrese in Tirana. This was the only Moslem Seminary in Albania. He was a religious teacher in one of the elementary schools of Tirana.

Good luck or bad, you may say as you wish, made Hasan ill. He was cared for in the largest hospital of Tirana. This was the same hospital where Nadira was working. It became Nadira's turn to nurse several of the patients. Among them was Hasan. Thus it was that Nadira saw him several times a day. She took his temperature and gave him medicine prescribed by the doctors.

At first, Hasan's heart was full of respect and sympathy towards his nurse for she gave him the best of care. With her angelic smile she seemed to relieve his pain. With the passing time, his respect and sympathy was replaced with a deep love. This love found its mate in Nadira's heart. Thus after Hasan was well again and released from the hospital, no time was lost and this love was crowned by their marriage.

After the passing of one year during which existed a happy and harmonious atmosphere, Hasan and Nadira were blessed with a girl whom they named Fatima, remembering that this was the name of our prophet's daughter.

Hasan was my friend as we were classmates in the General Medrese, and therefore, I was an invited guest at his wedding. It was there that I was introduced to his wife. A few days later, I left Tirana and as Hasan and I were very good friends we wrote often. He wrote me, among other things, about the arrival of his daughter. For thirteen years, however, the opportunity did not arise that we should meet.

Then, one cold wintry night, I was in Tirana and decided to visit my old friend Hasan. His joy when he saw me was very great. We embraced as

though we were brothers. Later we sat near the hearth telling each other of events which had occurred during those long thirteen years and of the many things which we had only slightly mentioned in our letters.

It was not long—at least it did not seem as though much time had passed. Then a glance at my watch revealed that several hours had elapsed. Then there was a knock at the door of the sitting room. The door opened and Nadira entered with her daughter.

Fatima, even though she had just celebrated her twelfth birthday, looked as though she might have been fifteen. She was quite tall. Her eyes were large and black like olives, her complexion was white as snow, and her hair was the color of chestnuts. When she spoke, her lips would yield an angelic and attractive smile. After she greeted me she sat next to her father and said:

"Dad, as Mother and I were returning from the market, I saw that the minarets of Et'hem Bey and Vjeter mosques were decorated and shone with brilliant green lights. I have never seen them illuminated like that. What is the occasion that they were so lustrous?"

"My dear," her father answered, "tomorrow is the Birthday of our Prophet Muhammed, peace and blessings of God be upon him. For that reason the mosques have been decorated with lights. Tomorrow night we are going to the mosque together at 7 o'clock to hear the Mevlud which is chanted in all mosques and Moslem homes throughout the world."

"What is Mevlud?" asked Fatima.

"The word 'Mevlud' is Arabic and it means 'Birth,'" answered her father. "We in Albania and other Moslem and non-Arab countries use this word for the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammed. When we say that the Mevlud is being sung, we mean that the life of the Holy Prophet is chanted in verses. It is sung every year and naturally each country sings it in its own language."

"Dad, would you tell me something about the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammed whose birthday you mentioned is tomorrow?" asked Fatima.

"As you see, Fatima, tonight we have company and I would like to chat with my friend and speak about our old times, but I promise you that beginning next Saturday, I will tell you, little by little, about the life of our Prophet, Muhammed—peace and blessings of God be upon him."

Fatima then rose and bade us goodnight and she went to her room.

Hasan and I stayed together until late at night. We recalled the sweet days of our youth which we spent together in school. As we parted, I asked Hasan if I could visit him every Saturday so I could hear him tell his daughter of the Prophet's history. And so it was that I went to Hasan's home every Saturday until he finished the story.

In the pages which follow are compiled the history which Hasan told Fatima. I wrote it just as I heard it. Here I have printed it for you, where I hope, my dear friends, you will be pleased with it just as Fatima was. Pray to God to guide all of us in the right path, the path which was preached by our Prophet, Muhammed, peace be upon him.

### The First Night: Arabia

Muhammed, my dear child, was born in Arabia, and before I tell you about his life, I see it proper to speak tonight a little on Arabia. Next week I will tell you about the Arabs, and thus you will be able to understand and better evaluate our Prophet Muhammed.

If you glance at a map of the world, you will see a peninsula is a portion of land whose three shores are surrounded by water and the other is united with land. This peninsula is located in Asia Minor which is linked to Africa. It is called Arabia. Arabia is surrounded by the Black Sea, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Arabia is a rather large peninsula. The land does not have many rivers, but it has many deserts full of sand, stones and bare hills. Even so, some parts of Arabia are very fertile. In those places there is sufficient water and the climate is good. Here wheat, corn, dates and grapes are grown. Coffee is planted in a province of Arabia called Yemen. Coffee from Yemen is the best in the world.

The largest province of the peninsula is owned by royalty. It is called "Saudi Arabia" and it is ruled by King Saud. It is very famous for its many oil wells near Dhahran. They are used by an American Company. This oil is making "Saudi Arabia" a prosperous country and it will be someday one of the most progressive parts of Asia.

In "Saudi Arabia" there is a section called "Higaz." Higaz has two large famous cities which are well known throughout the world. One is Mecca, which is a Holy City for all Moslems. Each Moslem turns his face towards it at prayer time.

In Mecca there is a large Mosque and in the center of its courtyard is a cube which is called "Kaba." Moslems believe that "The Kaba" was first built by the Prophet Abraham with the help of his son, Ismael. Those Moslems who are financially able, from all corners of the world go each year to visit the Kaba at the time of Kurban Bayram [the ritual sacrifice at the end of pilgrimage]. Here they fulfill their religious duty of the pilgrimage. About this pilgrimage, Fatima, you will learn more in your religious Sunday School. Those who visit Kaba take the title "Haji" and when they return to their homes, this title is placed before their name.

The second largest and famous city in Higaz is Medina and this is also a Holy City for Moslems. The Prophet Muhammed emigrated from his birth place, Mecca, and lived in Medina for more than ten years. Medina was a Moslem capital for a long period. There Muhammed died and was buried. Over his tomb was built a building which is called a mausoleum. Every Moslem who performs the pilgrimage to Mecca also may visit the mausoleum of the Holy Prophet, Muhammed—peace and blessings of God be upon Him—in Medina. . . .

"That is enough for tonight, Fatima," Hasan said to his daughter. "It is time for bed. Next week I will tell you about a few of their customs. Good night and God bless you."

"Thank you father. Good night." Fatima left and went to sleep as it was nearing midnight.



Source: Imam Vehby Isma'il, "Youth's Pages: Our Prophet, Muhammad." *Jeta Muslimane Shqiptare (Albanian Moslem Life)* 8, no. 1 (September 1959): 58–62.

### Chirri, Mohamad Jawad (1905–1964) *founder of the Islamic Center of America*

Born on October 1, 1905, Mohamad Jawad Chirri was a native of Lebanon and a graduate of the Theological Institute of an-Najaf al-Ashraf in Iraq. He was invited to Dearborn, Michigan, in 1949 to serve as spiritual leader to the Lebanese Shi'a community there, and he worked with this community and others to create the Islamic Center of Detroit, later named the Islamic Center of America (consecrated in 1962), one of Michigan's largest and most influential mosques.

During his years as pastor in Detroit, Chirri was also a prolific writer and scholar and produced a weekly newspaper column about Islam, wrote several historical works on the history of the Shi'a community such as *The Shi'ites under Attack* (1986),

published widely on Islamic jurisprudence and history in both English and Arabic, and hosted a weekly radio program for Muslim audiences in Detroit. As a pioneering interfaith activist, Chirri was the first Muslim to sit on the Detroit Interfaith Roundtable, and he wrote *Inquiries about Islam* (1965) as a guide for non-Muslims based on these interactions.

Chirri was also an outspoken critic of UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS in the Middle East, and he was interviewed frequently on local television and in local newspapers in the 1980s after the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and during the ongoing Lebanese Civil War. He advocated for a more evenhanded approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict and encouraged greater understanding of Islam and the objectives of Muslim political movements overseas.

Chirri was also a respected cleric outside Michigan. He was a leading figure in the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS (FIA) IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA from the 1950s to the 1970s and spoke frequently on behalf of intra-Muslim ecumenism. Traveling overseas on behalf of both the FIA and the Islamic Center of America, he met with the heads of state of Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Nigeria. In 1959, he also held talks with Mahmud Shaltout, the head of al-Azhar University, to discuss the legitimacy of the Ja'afari school of Islamic jurisprudence (the tradition followed by the majority of the world's Shi'a Muslims). Shortly after this meeting, Shaltout issued a controversial and much cited FATWA, or "religious opinion," accepting the legitimacy of Ja'afari teachings.

Chirri was well known by various presidents and their administrations, who asked him to help improve U.S. relations with Lebanon and Iran. Most notably, he advised Jimmy Carter during the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979 and 1980, and he intervened to free Americans held hostage in Lebanon in the 1980s. Chirri traveled extensively in the United States, lecturing on Islam, helping to establish Muslim communities in new cities, and addressing the media on political issues of the day. Finally, he undertook missionary and development work in Sierra Leone, where he helped Muslim immigrants build a children's hospital.

Chirri died on November 10, 1994. His greatest work was the establishment of the Islamic Center of America, whose congregation continues to honor the life of Imam Chirri. In 1969, they dedicated their grand new facility, the largest mosque complex in North America, in his honor.

Sally Howell

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### Chishti Sufi Order

Chishti refers to a form of SUFISM in which participants use *qawwali*, a traditional form of Sufi music from the Indian subcontinent, in their religious rituals. By using music, Chishti Sufis are able to gain a tool for "moving the heart" to a more refined and ecstatic state. The Chishti, also known as the Chishtiyya, use *qawwali* as a way to memorialize their spiritual lineage, which remains today an important part of Chishti religious practices. The Chishti Order was founded by Khwaja Abu Ishaq Chishti during the 10th century in what is present-day Iran. The lineage of Chishti leaders stayed in Persia until Khwaja Mu'inuddin Chishti (1142–1236), one of the most renowned saints in the order's history, brought the order to India.

Playing an important role in establishing Islam in India, Mu'inuddin's tomb in Ajmer, India, is the international headquarters of the order as well as a sacred shrine. The Chishti Order has been widespread and influential in South Asia, where it is known for its openness to incorporating indigenous forms of poetry and musical expression into its rituals—a trend that has continued in the United States.

Chishti Sufis are among the oldest Sufi orders in America, and the first Chishti Order was known as the Sufi Order of the West. In 1910, INAYAT KHAN (1882–1927), a musician from India, first spread Chishti teachings in public lectures across the United States. Known as the first Sufi teacher in America, Inayat Khan advocated an approach of universal religious appeal in which readings from all the world's scriptures would be read in a service with chants and meditation practices. Practices of this order include *DHIKR*, the use of "meditative prayer." The prescribed Islamic prayers, or *salat*, may or may not be observed.

Khan's son, VILAYAT INAYAT KHAN (1916–2004), led the order after his father's death, and his disciples often took a new spiritual name that was either Islamic or Hindu upon initiation to the order. During his leadership from the 1960s through the end of the 20th century, it is estimated that 10,000 people in the United States became initiated into the order. Vilayat Khan also founded a community in New Lebanon, New York, called the Abode of the Message in 1975. By the 21st century, perhaps only 2,000 of those initiated were currently practicing Sufism. Vilayat Khan's son, Zia Inayat Khan, inherited the mantle of leadership in 2000.

In addition to the Sufi Order of the West, other Chishti-inspired orders arose in the United States. The Sufi Islamia Ruhaniat Society (SIRS) was founded by Murshid Samuel Lewis (1896–1970), a disciple of Inayat Khan. Presently, the disciples of Lewis have become closely associated with the Sufi Dance Movement and with the MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER of America. As of 2008, the leader was Pir Moineddin Jablonski. Smaller Chishti orders with a presence in the United States have included the Holland-based International Sufi Movement, which was

originally led by Maheboob Khan (1887–1948), the younger brother of Inayat Khan; the Chishti Mission to the West, based in upstate New York; the Chishti Foundation, based in Chicago; and the Sami Mahal Sufi Center in San Rafael, California.

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**Christian-Muslim dialogue** See INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS.

**civil liberties** See SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, USA PATRIOT ACT.

**Civil Rights movement** See NATION OF ISLAM.

### Clarence 13X (Clarence Edward Smith, Allah) (1928–1969) *founder of the Five Percenters*

Clarence 13X was born Clarence Edward Smith on February 22, 1928, in Danville, Virginia. At the age of 18, he moved to Harlem, New York, with his family, and in 1950, he married Dora Smith, with whom he had two children, a son and a daughter. He also had two sons by Willeen Jowers, a longtime girlfriend. He served for two years in the UNITED STATES MILITARY in Korea before becoming a member of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) in the early 1960s. He joined MALCOLM X's Harlem mosque, quickly rose through the ranks of the NOI, and entered the FRUIT OF ISLAM, the all-male auxiliary of the organization.

Though he originally accepted the NOI teaching that God was a man named W. D. FARD, after studying the NOI's "Supreme Wisdom" lessons, Clarence 13X came to reject this tenet. Instead, he came to the conclusion that he was, in fact, God, as were all black men. In 1963, shortly after coming to this realization, he was expelled from the NOI. Although the exact reason for his expulsion was unclear, it was supposedly for gambling and drug use. After leaving the NOI, the former NOI member maintained the importance of the Supreme Wisdom lessons, but he began teaching about the divinity of black men. By 1964, he had taken the name *Allah* and had gained a following among black youths in Harlem and Brooklyn. His followers became known as the Nation of Gods and Earths, or the FIVE PERCENTERS.

On December 9, 1964, two men attempted to kill Clarence 13X, though it was unclear if it was a planned assassination attempt or the result of a dispute. They shot him repeatedly in the chest, and a doctor at the hospital informed his friends that he had passed away. The doctor later apologized, saying that a different man had died, but this mistake developed into legend among Five Percenters, who believe that the Five Percenters' founder did, in fact, die but then rose from the dead.

In 1965, while leading a group of followers on a march through Harlem, Clarence 13X was arrested for felony assault. The police were called because members of his group were apparently blocking traffic in front of the Hotel Theresa. During his trial, the man who referred to himself as Allah repeatedly spoke out of turn and declared his divinity, and as a result he was committed to Bellevue Hospital for a psychological evaluation. After more than four months of evaluation, the court determined that he was unable to understand the charges against him, and Clarence 13X was institutionalized indefinitely. While in Matteawan State Hospital, he was diagnosed and treated as a paranoid schizophrenic with delusions of grandeur. During this time, he was added to the FBI's Security Index, and the federal government began monitoring him, as it did many other black religious leaders in this period. He was released from the hospital in 1967.

After being discharged from Matteawan, Clarence 13X went on to develop a close working relationship with NEW YORK CITY mayor John Lindsay. He was a member of the mayor's task force established to prevent racial violence in the city, and the two worked to create programs for Harlem's youths. Their efforts led to a relationship with the Urban League and the creation of an academy called the Allah School in Mecca, intended to help Five Percenters graduate from high school. Clarence 13X was also praised for his ability to ease racial tensions in Harlem, and he was credited with quelling riots after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968.

On June 13, 1969, Clarence 13X was on his way to the apartment of his estranged wife, Dora, when he was attacked from behind. He was shot and killed by three unknown men. Some speculated that the NOI was behind the assassination, though members of the organization insisted they had no involvement. Clarence's funeral was held on the afternoon of June 16, 1969, and as many as 400 people attended.

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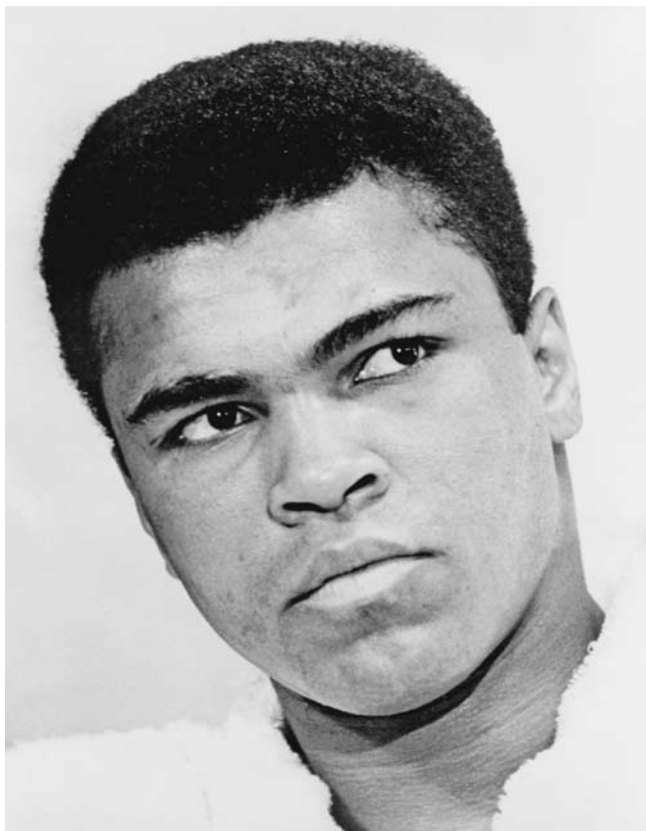


**class differences** See DEMOGRAPHICS.

### ***Clay, a/k/a Ali v. United States***

In this Supreme Court case, technically known as *Clay, a/k/a Ali v. United States* (1971), American boxer MUHAMMAD ALI, formerly known as Cassius Clay, successfully fought for the right to be recognized as a conscientious objector for military service based on his Muslim faith. In 1966, Ali, a member of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), received a draft notice requiring his participation in the Vietnam War. Over the next five years, Ali pursued numerous channels of legal review to fight the draft, with his case ultimately being decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. While the case did not set a significant legal precedent regarding NOI faith and military service, it did generate enormous publicity and drew national attention to the complexity of the issues involved.

Initially, Ali sought draft exemption on hardship grounds, explaining to the local draft board that he was the sole financier of his extended family and would be unable to support them on a small military salary. When his first



After being stripped of his boxing title for refusing induction into the U.S. military in 1966, Muhammad Ali became one of the most controversial and effective symbols of resistance to the Vietnam War. (Library of Congress)

request was denied, he turned to the Kentucky Appeal Board, this time adding the argument that the QUR'AN forbids Muslims from fighting on the side of nonbelievers. Ali said that he considered the United States a Christian country and that therefore, as a Muslim, it would go against his faith to fight on its behalf.

In effect, Ali's new request was an argument to be recognized as a conscientious objector (CO). CO status, which exempts individuals from combat service, can be granted when a person demonstrates that his religious beliefs are against activities of war. People who have CO status may still be required to complete military service but are permitted to have noncombat positions. Three basic requirements must be met for CO status as defined by the Selective Service Act: First, the petitioner must be opposed to all forms of war; second, the person's opposition must be rooted in a religious belief; and third, he or she must be sincere.

While appealing to the state board, Ali added attorney Hayden Covington to his legal team. Covington had been instrumental in fighting for recognition of CO status for Jehovah's Witnesses during the 1940s, and he added a new detail to the appeal. Based on Ali's active preaching in NOI mosques over the years, Covington asked the board to consider total exemption for him as a member of the clergy.

Prior to making its decision, the Kentucky board submitted Ali's case to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), a standard procedure of investigation in such cases. Family, friends, and acquaintances of Ali were interviewed in efforts to evaluate the sincerity of his stance on military service. After reviewing the evidence, the hearing officer concluded that Ali's beliefs were genuine, and he recommended to the DOJ that Ali be granted CO status.

Under usual circumstances, a hearing officer's recommendation is the same recommendation that the DOJ passes along to a state appeal board. However in this case, the DOJ recommendation contravened the conclusions of the hearing officer, instead advising the state to deny Ali's request for CO status. The report indicated that Ali had met none of the CO status requirements, conveyed suspicion about the timing of Ali's professed faith, and suggested that he was selective about war, objecting to fighting on behalf of the United States but otherwise not opposed to war in general. The Kentucky board then denied the appeal, though it did not specify the reason for its decision. Ali was ordered to report for military service in April 1967.

Ali reported for preinduction screenings, but at the end of the procedures, he refused to be sworn in for military service. In writing, he explained that as a member of the clergy he should be exempt. Due to the controversial nature of his refusal to serve, Ali's American boxing license was swiftly revoked, and he was also stripped of his World Heavyweight Champion title. Less than two months later, a federal court

found Ali guilty of willfully refusing to be inducted into military service. He was sentenced to five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine and was ordered to turn over his passport. This last measure prevented Ali from participating in boxing matches overseas during his appeal of the decision, and it contributed to his subsequent financial troubles.

In 1968 and 1969, Ali continued to find new legal avenues for pursuing draft exemption, but the decisions were not in his favor. For example, the U.S. Court of Appeals upheld his conviction and determined that his primary profession was boxing rather than ministry. In another example, after declining to hear Ali's case, the Supreme Court directed a lower court to review whether illegal wiretapping had contributed to his prosecution, but that court ruled it had not. Ali's legal team attempted a second appeal to the Supreme Court, citing a number of possible legal questions; to their surprise, the Court decided to hear it based on questions about the DOJ's characterization of Ali's objections to war in its 1967 letter.

During the Supreme Court proceedings, Justice John Harlan wrote a memo to his fellow justices. Based on his reading of Elijah Muhammad's *Message to the Blackman in America* (1965), Harlan determined that the Nation of Islam professed strong religious objections to any war not directed specifically by Allah. Therefore, the suggestion that Ali and the NOI were selective about wars they would and would not fight in, wrote Harlan, was an essential misunderstanding of the theology. Though not legally binding, Harlan's conclusion was an important recognition of the religious basis of the NOI's stance on military service and contributed to the outcome of the case.

In June 1971, the Supreme Court rendered a "per curiam" decision, or a decision made by a majority of the court without deliberation due to the obvious answer. They found that Ali's beliefs about war were indeed based on his understanding of Islam, and they noted that the original hearing examiner had found him sincere. The 1967 DOJ report incorrectly implied that Ali had satisfied none of the tests for CO status, and that may have been influential for the state's decision. Due to this flaw in the legal proceedings, the Court ruled that the decision must be overturned. In other words, the Kentucky Appeal Board's denial of Ali's CO status was reversed, and the criminal charges for refusing induction were dismissed.

Much was made of the case in the media, with some pointing out the irony that Ali's basic job was to fight people, yet he refused to fight in Vietnam. There was also clear evidence of tensions between prowar and antiwar forces and between Muslim and Christian Americans playing out in news coverage of the case. Ironically, during the course of the case, Ali had a falling out with the NOI. Though he remained devout, Elijah Muhammad suspended him from the organization for one year. The rift between Ali and the NOI was not fully repaired until several years after the case was resolved.

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### Cleveland, Ohio

By the 21st century, Cleveland, the second-largest city in the state of Ohio, with a population of around 450,000, was home to approximately 25,000 to 50,000 Muslims and more than 15 mosques. Cleveland's central role in the historical development of Islam among African Americans in the 20th century was reflected in the fact that about 35 percent of these Muslims were African American, a larger percentage than in the country as a whole. The remainder of Cleveland's community was composed primarily of SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, and AFRICAN MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS.

#### BLACK SUNNI MUSLIMS

Cleveland's place in the 20th-century formation of African-American Islam was critical. Like other northern cities, Cleveland hosted branches of the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE OF AMERICA, the Ahmadiyya movement, and the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), but what made Cleveland different was its role in the history of African-American Sunni Islam. In 1937, WALI AKRAM (1904–94) left the Ahmadiyya movement and created one of the first African-American Sunni Muslim mosques in the country. Akram's followers adopted his "Muslim Ten Year Plan" meant to bring religious and economic revival to the black community in the midst of the GREAT DEPRESSION.

Several of them would go on to establish their own mosques in Cleveland. In 1953, Afzal Nabi created Masjid al-Mumin ("Mosque of the Believer"), which eventually joined the Darul Islam movement, a national network of black Sunni mosques

committed to neighborhood renewal and religious piety. In 1974, Omar Samiullah, a former member of Akram's First Cleveland Mosque, cofounded Masjid An-Nur ("Mosque of Light"), which became associated with the TABLIGHI JAMA'AT, a South Asian missionary group that combined religious piety with a desire to stay out of politics. Finally, in 1978, Sulayman Abdul Malik, another associate of Wali Akram, established Masjid Ummatullah ("Mosque of the Community of God"), a socially conservative mosque in which men and women inhabit separate social spaces and women wear niqab, a face veil.

Because of Akram and his associates, Cleveland became one of the few U.S. cities in which Sunni Islam was first associated with African-American Muslims rather than with immigrants. The history of Cleveland's Muslim community proves that from the very beginning of African-American Islam, black Americans were attracted to multiple interpretations of the faith. This fact contradicts the assumption long held by scholars and the public at large that African Americans first came to Islam under the auspices of the NOI, which—while the most popular Muslim movement among African Americans after WORLD WAR II—was not the *only* Muslim movement among African Americans.

#### THE NATION OF ISLAM AND ITS HEIRS

In fact, compared to the Ahmadiyya and the African-American Sunni Muslims, the NOI was late in coming to Cleveland. In 1957, the NOI founded Temple No. 18; its local minister was Tariq Hamzah from Youngstown, Ohio. In 1958, the temple sponsored a visit by NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD. NOI leaders never considered Cleveland a center of importance, though the movement has had an ongoing presence in the city for half a century. In the 1960s, when African Americans, charging employment discrimination, boycotted a local McDonald's, one former protester recalled that NOI ideas and publications, especially *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, were frequently invoked by protesters to explain their actions.

After breaking away from the NOI and forming his own organization called the Muslim Mosque, Inc., MALCOLM X delivered one of his most famous speeches in Cleveland. On April 3, 1964, he spoke to a crowd of 3,000 at the Cory Methodist Church about the "Ballot or the Bullet." In this speech, Malcolm X said that while he remained a committed Muslim, he now advocated a unified and interfaith response among African Americans to the problem of injustice. Religion was a personal matter, while the struggle for black political liberation was something that all blacks shared. Regardless of whether African Americans used the ballot or the bullet to achieve their freedom, they would achieve their goals "by any means necessary."

In 1968, Fred Ahmed Evans, a former member of Masjid Mumin who a year earlier had established the Black Movement of New Libya, a radical protest group, helped lead

an organized uprising against Cleveland police. Joined by both Muslim and non-Muslim radicals, Evans engaged in a violent gun battle with police and on May 12, 1969, was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death by an Ohio court. In 1978, he died from cancer in an Ohio state prison. After the death of Elijah Muhammad in 1975, the NOI's new leader, W. D. MOHAMMED, found it difficult to find a local leader who would support his effort to turn the NOI into a Sunni Islamic organization. From 1975 to 1979, three different leaders resigned from the mosque. In 1979, however, former NOI minister Clyde X Rahman was appointed leader of W. D. Mohammed's followers in Cleveland and succeeded in building a new mosque, Masjid Bilal.

Other claimants to Elijah Muhammad's legacy in Cleveland included Roland Muhammad, who was appointed Minister Louis Farrakhan's representative in 1981, and Tariq Hamzah, the former NOI minister who had established an independent congregation under his own leadership in the 1970s.

#### MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS

Muslims first came to Cleveland in the late 19th century, when Syrian and Turkish immigrants sought employment in the rapidly industrializing city. They established a community association in 1918, although little evidence is available to chart the early religious activities of the community. Cleveland was one of many industrial cities where such immigrants arrived, although DETROIT, NEW YORK CITY, and even CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, became far more important centers of Muslim-American immigrant activity.

After Congress passed the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, easing restrictions against non-Europeans seeking to come to the United States, thousands of Muslim immigrants came to Cleveland, attracted to employment in the health care industry, academia, and other professional careers. In 1966 and 1967, a group of Indian, Palestinian, Yugoslav, Pakistani, and Lebanese Muslims formed the Islamic Center of Cleveland. When the center was rebuilt in 1995, thanks partly to the effective fund-raising of Palestinian gynecologist Azzam Ahmad, it became one of the largest mosques in the state of Ohio and one of the finest examples of Islamic modernist architecture in the country.

The end of the 20th century saw additional immigration and a blossoming of religious diversity among Cleveland's immigrant Muslim populations. In the 1980s, Abdussamih Moet, an Egyptian professor of engineering at Case Western Reserve University, shepherded the growth of the university's MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA) chapter, which hosted Friday prayers, distributed Islamic literature, and eventually united with students at Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College to form an MSA chapter of Greater Cleveland. By 1988, the group has raised \$32,000 for the purchase of an old flower shop in the University Circle



area as its headquarters. In the 1990s, the building became known as Masjid Uqbah ("Mosque of Uqbah," a companion of the prophet Muhammad), and after raising \$200,000, members, who hailed from several different racial and ethnic backgrounds, built a new mosque in 1999.

By the early 21st century, Cleveland was also home to SHI'À MUSLIM AMERICAN and Sufi Muslim communities. The influx of African Muslim immigrants and their burgeoning ties to African-American Muslims led to the establishment of several African Sufi groups in the area. In the 1990s, Daud Abdul Malik, the leader of a Sunni African-American mosque, invited Sufi leader Hassan Cise of the Tijani Sufi order to give several guest lectures in Cleveland. That same decade, Hussein Akram, grandson of Muslim pioneer Wali Akram, established a Sufi lodge devoted to the teachings of the West African Murudiyah Sufi order.

### CONCLUSION

By the early 21st century, Cleveland's Muslim community shared many characteristics with other Muslim-American communities. It was ethnically, socially, and religiously diverse, reflecting various strands of Muslim religious traditions. Muslim Americans in Cleveland were also racially diverse, and while there were instances of multiracial and interracial cooperation, parts of the Cleveland Muslim community were divided along lines of race—as the national Muslim community was. How the history of Muslim Americans in Cleveland differed from that of many other cities was its role in sparking the early 20th-century growth of Sunni Islam among African Americans. Though Cleveland's black Sunni groups were once a minority among black Americans—overshadowed by the more famous Nation of Islam—they anticipated and helped to shape a different future in which African-American Sunni Muslims would constitute the majority of black American Muslims.

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**clothing** See DRESS.

### coffeehouses

The coffeehouse first appeared in the cities of the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century and rapidly became an important institution of civil society. By the late 17th century, it had worked its way to western Europe, where it also played an important role in inaugurating early modern consumer culture. When immigrants began arriving in the United States from eastern Europe, Turkey, and Syria in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, they brought with them the distinctive Ottoman-style coffeehouse, a male-oriented space for relaxing, conducting business, and discussing the political issues of the day. For Muslim immigrants, as for others, these coffeehouses became an important institution through which they developed solidarity with members of their respective ethnic and religious groups and began the work of institutionalizing Islam as an American faith tradition.

By the middle 1920s, Muslim immigrants had established coffeehouses in BOSTON, NEW YORK CITY, DETROIT, CHICAGO, and other urban centers. Detroit's Muslim coffeehouses were well documented by the local media, who found them quaint, if somewhat exotic and archaic, institutions. They provided immigrants an important public space where they could meet together with others who spoke a common language; hear news from overseas; share information about potential jobs and good housing; assist one another in translating, writing, and reading important documents; and relax together in a familiar setting.

"Turkish coffee" was served in small cups, thick and dark. Backgammon and other games were provided to keep patrons entertained, and the *narjilah* ("waterpipe") was introduced as well, with aromatic tobacco. Many coffeehouses also provided hot meals, not in the style of full-service restaurants but to sustain workers who were living in the city without families or functioning kitchens. Detroit's coffeehouses were used as mailing addresses and public bulletin boards by workers who were often somewhat transient, and they provided men lacking comfortable homes or successful businesses with a place to meet public officials as well. It was from the coffeehouse that ethnic clubs, young men's associations, and immigrant benevolent societies were first launched, and it was from coffeehouses that the city's early mosques were launched as well.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Detroit newspaper reporters visited several coffeehouses at the intersection of Lafayette Avenue and Hastings Street on Muslim HOLIDAYS. Turks and Albanians met together in one location, Indians and Afghans met across the street, and Arabic speakers met a half block away. Each would celebrate the holiday prayers with familiar FOOD and socialize afterward in a familiar language. As the Muslim populations spread out across the city and its suburbs, their coffeehouses spread as well. By the mid-1930s, there were a half dozen "Syrian" and Turkish coffeehouses in the Dearborn neighborhood known



as the Southend. It was from these coffeehouses that plans were first laid to open mosques in the city, funds were first raised, and leaders selected. Two mosques opened nearby, the Progressive Arabian Hashemite Society in 1937 and the American Moslem Society in 1938.

As male-centered spaces, coffeehouses lost much of their appeal by the 1950s and were not popular among American-born Muslims. However, when new immigration picked up in the 1960s, coffeehouses gained momentum as well, this time among immigrants from Yemen, Palestine, and Bosnia. Several of Detroit's more prominent mosque congregations got their start in coffeehouses in the 1960s and 1970s.

By the 21st century, male-centered coffeehouses remained popular among recently arrived immigrants, most recognizably among Yemenis, Bengalis, Bosnians, and Iraqis. Many of the new immigrant mosques blur the lines between mosque and coffeehouse, setting aside social spaces where coffee is served, candidates for public office stop by to greet potential voters, news of work opportunities is shared, assistance is available for those seeking green cards, marriages are arranged, and satellite television provides continuous coverage of news from Iraq, Yemen, Palestine, Bosnia, Pakistan, or Bangladesh. Coffeehouses have continued to act as stepping-stones to new mosque development for new immigrants.

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the male-centered, ethnically distinctive coffeehouse also competed with a new style of café, a gender-neutral space where men and women could eat, drink coffee, and sometimes smoke a water pipe together, often in groups or as couples. Especially popular around colleges and universities—in the Middle East as much as in the United States—this new version of the coffeehouse appealed to Muslims and non-Muslims as well as to people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. It provided a relaxed social space in which to discuss matters both sacred and profane.

Sally Howell

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## Columbian Exposition of 1893

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, hosted the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, an event that captured the imagination and attention of both the nation and the world. The World's Fair commemorated the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's journey to North America, but the exposition also celebrated American progress, booming industry, and technological prowess. From the lofty architecture and exhibits to the exotic sights and sounds of the Midway Plaisance, Chicago's fair embodied Americans' optimism and confidence in their nation's contributions to refined culture and society. The exposition demonstrated America's desire to claim a place alongside the European cultural centers as a key contributor to world "civilization." Chicagoans and Americans considered the 1893 exposition to be evidence for their case that the United States represented the pinnacle of what modern men and women could achieve. The exposition earned the nickname "the White City," in reference to the buildings' white plaster façades intended to mimic marble, since the fairgrounds' grand architecture and stunning displays were meant to represent America's idealist vision of the ultimate cityscape.

More than a patriotic expression of America's progress from a small, new nation to a thriving, more established country, the exposition was also a showcase for cultures and peoples from around the world. Some 27 million visitors paid 50 cents to explore the fair, picking and choosing which of the 60,000 exhibits they would visit. It was here, within the fairgrounds, that many Americans encountered Islam for the first time. There was no systematic presentation of Islam as a world religion, but the average fairgoer had the opportunity to observe some of the architecture, dress, worship practices, and lifestyles of the Muslims who participated in the exposition.

There were a number of predominantly Muslim countries that participated in the Columbian Exposition of 1893, including Algeria, Egypt, Persia, Sudan, Tunisia, and Turkey. Other countries with minority Muslim populations such as India also incorporated Muslim cultural items into their exhibits in the Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building. Even so, it was the Midway Plaisance that captured fairgoers' attention, with its lively jumble of the first Ferris wheel, the popular performances of Harry Houdini and Egyptian belly dancers, and reconstructed villages inhabited by Africans, Indians, Bedouins, and many others.

The midway contained medieval European villages alongside exotic eastern settlements such as the Javanese village, which featured homes built of bamboo and live residents of the Indonesian island of Java. Javanese delicacies and handicrafts provided contrast to the simple lines of the Javanese Islamic mosque. Like the Javanese village, the Johore village (from what is now Malaysia) reminded American fair-

goers that Islam spread far beyond the Middle East and had faithful adherents in East and Southeast Asia as well.

Unlike the portrayals of Javanese and Johorean daily life, the Turkish village boasted opulent markets, luxurious furniture, fabrics, and a gilded mosque. Similarly, the Persian exhibit showcased the wealth and lifestyles of the elite with a reproduction of the shah's palace and displays of the finest Persian rugs, silks, metals, and jewelry. Visitors could sample Turkish, Syrian, and Persian fare in nearby restaurants or watch a performance of a wedding in Damascus.

The Persian dance hall and the "Streets of Cairo" tended to provoke mixed reactions among American observers. Some were displeased by the expressive dancing of the Egyptian and Persian women, while others did not care for the noise and crowded atmosphere of the Cairene street. Nevertheless, the Cairo portion of the midway managed to convey the vibrancy of downtown Cairo. The markets, homes, a beautifully appointed mosque, street performers, children playing, an ornate mansion, and madrasa all expressed different aspects of Egyptian and Islamic culture. The urban flavor of the Cairo street stood in stark contrast to the simplicity of the Bedouin encampment, where the camels and snake charmers proved to be main attractions.

The midway's Muslim exhibits were intended to be both educational and entertaining for the fairgoers. The Islamic exhibits served as spectacles for the more "refined" and "advanced" American onlookers. American "tourists" often regarded the Muslim participants of the exposition as less civilized and an example of a more "primitive" religion and culture. But the midway also provided the opportunity for fairgoers to encounter Muslims as well their material cultures in ways not possible prior to the fair. Most Americans had had little exposure to Islam prior to the exposition, and what little knowledge they had of Islam and the "Orient" came from novels and travel accounts that often employed caricatures to depict Muslims. Overall, the result was a mixed message about Islam: Fairgoers formed their own judgments (often derogatory) about Muslims, while Muslims self-fashioned the presentations of their native cultures for the hordes of visitors to the midway.

At the World's Parliament of Religions, a congress that took place simultaneously with the exposition, American convert ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB served as the representative of Islam. The parliament was an occasion for Western Christians to celebrate both their newfound commitment to religious pluralism as well as what they deemed the superiority of their own religious identity and practice. The parliament's organizing committee labored to bring representatives from all world religions and well-known Christian sects to Chicago. The result was a two-week conference that focused on the themes of religion and its role in improving humanity and society around the world.

Webb was an American who had converted from Presbyterianism to Islam as an adult. His pro-Islam testimony and his praise of Islamic morals and spirituality provided sensational headlines for newspaper reporters covering the event. Webb's rejection of his native country's predominant religious identity for a more "foreign" and Eastern religious identity fascinated the parliamentary attendees. Webb spoke highly of the prophet MUHAMMAD and the cultural benefits of Islam, and his praise for his new religion led the parliament's audience of mostly white Christians to applaud Webb in a public expression of appreciation for Muslim teachings and virtues. However, Webb also provoked jeers when he expressed mild approval of the practice of polygamy. Webb's audience regarded the differences between Christian and Islamic morals and cultural practices as evidence for their judgment that Islam was an inferior religion.

Following the Columbian Exposition, some of the Muslim participants stayed on in Chicago and made their homes in the burgeoning metropolis. While 19th-century Chicago had a handful of immigrants from the Middle and Far East, their numbers increased dramatically after the turn of the century.

Americans from all parts of the country were also exposed to non-Christian religious practices for the first time. Tourists saw the muezzin, or PRAYER caller, performing the call to prayer and witnessed reenactments of Islamic daily routines in the Turkish village or the "Streets of Cairo" in the Midway Plaisance. The Columbian Exposition of 1893 was also a turning point for Muslims and their role in American society, as followers of Islam left the confines of American imagination and gained entry into the urban realities of an increasingly diverse America.

Sarah Miglio

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#### A Muslim Invocation at the Chicago World's Fair (1893)

*The 1893 Columbian Exposition (or World's Fair) in Chicago sought to present comprehensive coverage of the racial and ethnic diversity of the world's many peoples. The fairgrounds were divided into "the White City," which focused largely on North Americans and Anglo-Saxon cultures, and the Midway Plaisance, which covered the cultures of everyone else. The White City sought to project an image that was modern, progressive, Christian, and enlightened, while the Midway Plaisance displayed persons who were labeled*

*“barbaric,” “exotic,” “semicivilized,” and “primitive.” Seeking to show the triumph of (Anglo-) American ideals and culture over other ways of life, the fair’s organizers planned for Independence Day to be celebrated both in the White City and on the Midway Plaisance, where the “natives” and others would salute the stars and stripes. Though white Protestant Christians were in charge of the activities, no Protestant minister was on hand to deliver an opening prayer at the festivities held on the Midway Plaisance. Jamal Effendi, an imam, or religious leader, from the Saint Sophia mosque that had been constructed on the “Streets of Cairo” at the fair, stepped in at the last moment to do the honors on July 4, 1893. Writing about the opening ceremonies the next day, reporters for the Chicago Daily Tribune seemed stunned, shocked by the image of a Muslim imam asking God’s blessings on America, joined by Muslims and others loudly cheering for the United States. The newspaper’s coverage poked fun at the “grotesque” participants and their enthusiasm for the opening of the fair.*



#### **“All Nations Join In: Unique Patriotic Celebration on the Midway Plaisance”**

Strangers from all parts of the earth salute “Old Glory” and cheer as it floats in the breeze—bands of barbaric climes play their peculiar airs—twenty-five thousand people view the pageant and listen to stirring sentiments from able speakers.

“Old Glory” floated out in a gentle south wind in the west end of Midway Plaisance at noon yesterday over a motlier gathering of people than ever assembled before in the history of this country to do honor to the glorious Fourth of July. Dan Handley, a bronzed veteran, who served on the warship [USS] Sacramento in the late [civil] war pulled the cord which let the flag go free over the heads of 25,000 people, who represented nearly every nation and tribe on the face of the earth. Strange faces and strange costumes were there; there were Mohammedans [Muslims], Buddhists, and Jews; there were people whose fathers were cannibals; there were Laplanders and South Sea Islanders, all gathered beneath a threatening sky to do honor to the flag which stands for freedom and for a Christian nation. High above them was the Ferris wheel decorated in red, white, and blue, and stretching from one end of the plaisance to the other were rows of gay colored flags and Chinese lanterns, while from every flagstaff floated the Stars and Stripes or the emblem of some other country. To the east were the white domes of the Fair buildings, to the west the green

of Washington Park. Around all were strange buildings and styles of architecture in use from the frozen countries of the North to the tropical islands of the South Seas.

#### **Patriotic, Yet Grotesque**

It was all patriotic and beautiful, but it was grotesque, nevertheless, to see half-naked Soudanese, long-gowned Arabs, Chinamen and Turks celebrating an event they did not understand, but as patriotic and loyal in their cheering for all that as the people who were born under the Stars and Stripes. It was rather funny, too, for a Mohammedan priest to pray to Allah to bless this country and its flag when the Committee on Ceremonies had not thought it of sufficient importance to ask a Christian minister to do a like service. But for all that it was a great Fourth of July celebration, a celebration never equaled and probably one that will never be repeated.

The Concessionnaires’ club had charge of the arrangements, and from nearly all the villages in the plaisance a delegation of people were out to take part in the proceedings. From the Turkish and the Bedouin villages 294 men and women turned out, all in native costume. One hundred of the number were mounted on horses and ten came out on camels. These were the first on the scene, and when [Grand Marshall] Robert Levy appeared on an Arabian horse, wearing a red fez to distinguish him from ordinary people, he was roundly cheered by the crowd that had gathered outside the ropes waiting for the exercises to begin. The Turks and Bedouins were drawn up in line, except half a dozen of the fancy riders from the hippodrome. They galloped up and down before the crowd, brandishing long spears and frightening folks at either end of the line, who, not knowing how quickly they could turn, fancied they were going to be run into. Other horsemen engaged in sword combat and helped to while away the time until the next arrivals came.

#### **Artillery and Life Guard Appear**

An artillery company from the military exhibit which has been in Tattersall’s, but is now in the Stock Pavilion, came down the plaisance at a round trot, and turning in near the west gates drew up in the fighting rank back of the stand which had been erected for the speakers. A detach-

ment of Life Guards acted as escort. Col. H. Sling, manager of the Chinese Theater, marched in at the head of twenty of his actors and jugglers. They were all attired in holiday costume and carried flags and banners, the fancy umbrellas which are seen in Chinese processions, lanterns, and tom-toms. Just behind Col. Sling were two of the principal actors from the company now playing, and one of them carried the Stars and Stripes and the other the flag of China. These were drawn up in line facing the crowd outside the ropes and following them came a delegation of 115 people from the street in Cairo.

There were twenty people from the Algerian Village, forty Indians from the American Indian exhibit, representatives of the German Village, and four Javanese who had wandered away from the Javanese Village and who, coming in to hear the music, were given place across from the main ground on a dray, which served as a band stand once inside the inclosure, where, under the leadership of [band director] Frederick Phinney, it played patriotic and stirring melodies.

All this time the crowd outside the ropes was growing larger. People who came in through the plaisance were attracted by the bright colors of the costumes worn by the people in the long line of nations and by the music from the half a dozen Oriental bands, and stopped to see what it was all about.

At 11 o'clock there were 5,000 people waiting to see the flag unfurl and hear the cannon belch forth a salute in honor of Old Glory. By 12 o'clock the crowd had increased to 25,000, who surged against the lines and required the combined efforts of the detachments of Columbian Guards and the spearmen from Arabia to keep them from crowding in. Then Robert Levy, who acted as Grand Marshal, rode down the line, while Turks and Arabs and Chinese and Soudanese and the other strange people in the line saluted him according to the customs of their countries. He gave an order for them to march in double file and as the Turks were in front and could understand him they wheeled at the command and the others followed.

### **The Flag Flutters Out**

They were marched around in front of the lines and then grouped around the flagstaff, which stood just in front of the speakers' stand. Then

the lines were taken down and the crowds allowed to gather about nearer the place where the formal ceremonies were to take place. It was eight minutes past noon when [Civil War veteran] Dan Handley got his orders to pull the rope. There was a ball of bunting just at the top of the flagpole, and as the cord was pulled there was a flash of red, white, and blue bunting, the breeze caught it, and "Old Glory" floated out full and free above the people of the earth. A cheer went up strong and deep from the throats of the thousands gathered there, but it was lost in the booming of cannons just behind, a tribute from the soldiers of England to the day which marked the breaking away of the American colonies from the mother country they represented.

For five minutes the cheering continued, punctuated with the discharge of cannon, the beating of drums and the blowing of trumpets. Then silence was restored and Jamal Effendi, a priest [prayer leader] of the Mohammedan Church [that is, Islamic religion], stepped into the middle of the open space. He was attired in the full ceremonials of priesthood [sic], a dark blue robe embroidered in gold bullion, and as he turned his face toward the East [toward Mecca] and raised his hands in supplication, a silence fell upon the crowd. He began chanting a prayer to Allah for his blessing on the United States, the flag which floated above him, and on the exposition in Chicago. At every break in his prayer the Mohammedans [Muslims] united in a loud amen in old fashioned Methodist style. When he had ended his prayer all joined in three cheers for the Stars and Stripes, lead [sic] by "Far Away Moses" and the great Zeibek [a leader from Smyrna]. Then the band struck up on the "Star Spangled Banner" and followed with "America."

### **Welcome to the Brotherhood of Man**

The residents of Midway were then drawn up about the speakers' stand, and President G.W. Prussing made a short address, in which he referred to the cosmopolitan nature of the audience and said that on behalf of the people of the Midway Plaisance he extended a welcome to all. From whatever country they came, whether their skin was white or black, they all belonged to the great brotherhood of man and they all loved freedom and venerated the flag which stood for it that was flying above them.



Mr. Prussing introduced as the orator of the occasion Commissioner J. R. Burton of Kansas. Mr. Burton said in Substance:

Here today are assembled representatives from well-nigh every nation of the world. From our motherland, the Briton is here today to rejoice with us in our wonderful achievements since we left the old home forever; the Irishman is here to bask in the sunshine of American freedom; the sturdy Scotchman, the honest German, the vivacious and versatile Frenchman—aye, all continental Europe that has helped so much to build up America—all are here today to do us honor and salute our flag. From more distant shores come the Japanese, the Chinaman, the Persian, the Javanese, the Egyptian, the Turk, the Greek, the Italian, and the Russians, to study our commerce, to look at our civilization; and they stand here now uncovered, in amazement at our triumphs and peaceful victories. The salute fired to the flag a moment ago was fired by an Englishman from an English battery. The Swede, who has gained muscle, brain, and virtue in his rugged land, has come to see the thousands of his more prosperous kindred who have years ago crossed the north seas for a country that had a fairer climate and better laws. He is here today in great numbers, and joins his voice in loud acclaim with all America in celebrating her birthday.

The son of the ancient Moor, whose ancestors conquered nations, founded dynasties, developed the arts, and flourished in Oriental splendor, is here to learn the wonders of the new World. From far off South lands come the Algerians, the Congos, the south Sea Islanders, and the Bedouins, who will show to us their customs, development, ideas of life, efforts at art, science, and invention, and their religion; they are deeply impressed with the unheard of glories of our republic and heartily join in the festivities of this occasion.

From far-off lands of eternal snow come the Laplander and the Esquimau with their families, sledges, and reindeers. Yes, from the isles of the sea and the most remote corners of the earth comes every tongue, and with one joyous shout salute our flag—the Nation's ensign, the emblem of humanity.

When this great Fair is over and these representatives return to their distant homes may it be with better ideas of liberty and a deeper love for the United States.

### **Liberty Is Costly**

The Declaration of Independence was the production of centuries of toil and suffering. It was the result of cycles of mental filtration. It was the ripe fruit of the tree whose seed was planted at the beginning of time, and whose roots had been watered with the blood and tears of millions. The ancient philosophers could not look deep enough to discover its truths. No ancient poet had imagination enough to foretell its discovery. By reason of the slow and painful progress of the human mind toward a higher place of civilization there had to be the rise and fall of dynasties, the midnight of the middle ages, the dawn of the reformation, the emigration of pilgrims and development of their successors in this country for two centuries, under every privation, undergoing every wrong before they could reach the mountain top of right and justice; and standing there, with all the past behind and no precedent to guide them our ancestors were first to see, know and feel and proclaim to the world that "All men are created free and equal before the law." Blazed forth in the midst of bloody revolution, contended for by our fathers from Lexington to Yorktown, it took nearly a century more for our country to put into practice the Declaration of Independence, but even then it had to come as we all know at the awful price of treasure and blood.

But at last we have a universal acknowledgment of the truth expressed in that immortal declaration and the problem for us, the inheritors of all the fruits and victories of our fathers and brothers, to solve is, Can we maintain it?

But history teaches us that this constant struggle to a higher plane of civilization generally comes through tragic wars. Can we reverse this universal custom of man and make this progress without the letting of blood? Can we at once be virtuous enough and strong enough to maintain the liberty and rights of all before the law without war? Can governmental questions be settled alone in the arena of debate? Since every man is equal before the law can we have such healthy public sentiment as to compel each to perform the duty that goes hand in hand with this right? Have we such public sentiment now? Is every man regarded as a criminal who fails in this duty—a criminal in the eyes of the law, whether he be rich or poor, humble or great? Is not such a public conscience necessary for the peaceable maintenance of our

government? Can we help bring about that “ideal time” (for certainly it is not here) when the rich man helps the poor man and the poor man loves the great? Can we reach that higher ideal in government and society when

“The war drum throbs no longer,  
And the battle flag is furled  
In the parliament of man.  
The federation of the world.”

At the conclusion of Mr. Burton’s speech the people from the plaisance were formed in line of march, going down the broad street and the delegation from each of the villages dropping out of line as they passed their own gates.

In addition to the ceremonies at the west end of the plaisance each village and each concessionaire observed the Fourth in a fitting manner. There was special program of music in the German Village at 3 o’clock and at 7 o’clock by the infantry and cavalry bands.

### Wheel Outlined in Fire

The Ferris wheel was decorated with flags and bunting and from 9 to 11 o’clock at night red fire was burned from every fourth car and from the axle and from 9:30 till 12 o’clock the search lights on top of Manufactures Building were turned full upon the wheel. The burning of the red fire as the wheel revolved made a very pretty sight, causing it to look like an immense pin wheel as it turned.

The Iowa State band was in one of the cars during the afternoon and evening and it played a special program of patriotic music. In the Irish Village the program as arranged the day before of Irish and American music was carried out. Concerts were given at intervals of two hours during the day and evening. The Samoans in the South Sea Island Theater sung “America,” which had been translated into Samoan, to the great joy of the audiences. In the Javanese Village every native was decorated with a small American flag, while some of the men and women wore flags twisted into belts and turbans. In Cairo street donkeys and camels were decorated and the dancing girls carried small flags. “The Columbian March,” arranged by C. M. Zicher and dedicated to [U.S. President] Grover Cleveland, was played for the first time. There was a battle of flowers and Calcium lights were burned at night in Old Vienna.

High above the Chinese Theater floated a red flag with the Declaration of Independence translated into Chinese characters painted on it. The Dahomians wore shirts made out of United States flags. In the Lapland Village Old King Bull was hilariously patriotic, and he stood on a bench waving a United States flag and trying to sing “The Star Spangled Banner.” In the beauty show the section devoted to the two girls who represent the United States was the chief center of attraction, and the entire building was decorated with flags and bunting. In the Submarine Exhibit the diver sung America into the telephone, which is connected with his headpiece, and the people above crowded around the receiver to hear for the first time on record a song from beneath the water.

Midway Plaisance never before had so many visitors as yesterday. All day long the broad street was crowded with thousands of people and every concessionaire did as much business as his place could handle.



Source: *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 5 July 1893, pp. 9, 11.

### contraception

Muslim Americans have a long history of debate around whether and when it is permissible to use contraception. Over the years, their opinions on contraception have been derived not only from Islamic views on sex and sexuality but also from their own processes of navigating the challenges of Muslim-American life.

Starting in the early 1960s, ELIJAH MUHAMMAD and other leaders in the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) were vocal opponents of contraception. The NOI’s opposition to contraception was at least in part designed to defend black women against involuntary sterilization, a medical practice that continued into the 1970s. NOI leaders saw this assault on the bodies of black women as a continuation of the violence black families had endured since slavery. In *Muhammad Speaks*, the movement’s newspaper published from 1961 to 1976, Elijah Muhammad and NOI cartoonists warned against the dangers of birth control, instructing members to avoid contraceptives and have large families. Despite the NOI’s strong stance against contraception, individual NOI members allowed some flexibility based on life circumstances. In oral history interviews, Muslim women from Syracuse, WASHINGTON, D.C., and NEW YORK CITY remembered that several families at their temples in the early 1970s used contraception when childbirth posed a

risk to the woman's health or when the family was unable to provide for another child.

For Sunni Muslim Americans, the QUR'AN and the SHARI'A, or Islamic "law and ethics," have been consulted for guidance on the use of contraception. While the Qur'an is silent on the permissibility of contraception, there are several reports, or hadiths, in which the prophet Muhammad spoke approvingly of the practice of *al-azl*, or the "withdrawal method" (coitus interruptus). Historically, Muslim jurists have interpreted this prophetic tradition to signal the general permissibility of contraception.

However, determining the practical application of these traditions and legal rulings is more difficult. For guidance, Muslim Americans have often consulted imams and fellow believers. The rise of the INTERNET also brought Web sites and discussion boards that Muslim Americans could turn to for advice. Ultimately, the process of determining how contraception fits into living a faithful life in the United States has been a deeply personal one. For example, Marwa (a pseudonym), a Muslim mother from Los Angeles interviewed in Saleemah Abdul-Ghafur's 2005 anthology *Living Islam Out Loud*, decided not to use contraception because she believed that birth control interfered with God's plan. Like many WOMEN in her 1990s AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM community, Marwa understood the financial hardship that came with having a large family to be a sacrifice made for her faith. Such personal struggles around sex, sexuality, family, and faith featured prominently in Muslim-American women's stories collected in Abdul-Ghafur's anthology.

Since the late 1980s, Muslim-American debates around contraception have been further complicated by HIV/AIDS. While many Muslim Americans viewed HIV prevention with condoms as un-Islamic, others saw condom distribution as an Islamic duty. At a 1991 forum in New York, Naima Saif'ullah, a veteran sexually-transmitted-disease outreach worker, explained, "everyone to whom I hand a condom out there in the streets has to be regarded as a potential Muslim. We are not talking about birth control! If you don't take precautions in the midst of an epidemic, you may be guilty of killing another believer. According to the Prophet, the consequence for that is eternal hell!" In 2006, this same understanding guided Waheedah Shabazz-el, an HIV-positive PHILADELPHIA Muslim activist, as she led a campaign to make condoms available to prisoners in the city's jails.

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## cookbooks

Cookbooks are collections of recipes, but they serve many purposes beyond conveying basic information about how to prepare certain dishes. Because Muslims have few DIETARY LAWS to follow—chiefly, they refrain from consuming blood and pork—most recipes can be adapted to Muslim use by using halal meat (meat from animals butchered according to Muslim practice). While Muslims may use many different cookbooks, some books offer information about Muslim religious practices. Cookbooks, especially those that include discussions of customs, geography, and religion, evoke entire cultures. American cookbooks that feature Islam have fallen into two broad categories: culinary tourism and guides for a Muslim home. Works of culinary tourism introduce a readership of Muslims and non-Muslims alike to the culinary culture of a particular region. Works of nostalgia, usually a mixture of cookbook and memoir, recreate a community that has been lost, whether due to social change or to war. Guides to creating a Muslim home offer advice for maintaining Muslim identity, especially in children.

### CULINARY TOURISM

Culinary tourism, especially exploration of Middle Eastern cuisine, has been the largest category of Muslim cookbook. Because these books have been organized by region, they have not necessarily stressed the influence of Islam as a religion. The most prominent example of this comparative silence on Islam is Harry Nickles's *Middle Eastern Cooking* (1969), a volume in the landmark series *Time-Life Foods of the World*. This volume, which appeared as gourmet cooking

was becoming fashionable in the United States, presents the cuisines of Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, Greece, and Israel.

Although it explores many predominantly Muslim lands, it does not describe the culinary practices associated with any Muslim holiday. For instance, the book mentions Ramadan in passing, but it does not describe *iftar*, the evening meal that ends the daylong fast during the holy month. By contrast, the book features photographs of Greeks celebrating Easter and Jews celebrating Sukkoth, a harvest festival. The comparative sophistication of the representation of Judaism and Christianity reflects the greater understanding of these religions in the United States in the 1960s. As Islam became more familiar in the United States, Middle Eastern cookbooks have represented the religion more completely.

For instance, Alison Benke's *Cooking the Middle Eastern Way* (2007), part of the series Easy Menu Ethnic Cookbooks, lists particular dishes for specific Muslim holidays. For Eid al-Fitr, the celebration at the end of Ramadan, *Cooking the Middle Eastern Way* suggests *mansaf*, a stew of lamb and onions thickened with yogurt. A sidebar suggests substituting chicken for the lamb or even making a vegetarian version with potatoes. Because lamb is not commonly eaten in the United States, these substitutions reflect American tastes as well as an American emphasis on low-fat cooking. During Ramadan, *Cooking the Middle Eastern Way* suggests breaking the fast at the end of the day by eating a date, which the cookbook describes as the custom of the prophet Muhammad, followed by *shourbet adas*, a hearty soup of red lentils. Sweets such as *barazek* (sesame cookies) and *basboosa*, a dense cake made with semolina flour and yogurt, conclude the meal.

Lila Zaouali's *Medieval Cuisine of the Islamic World* (2007), despite its historical focus, offers more vivid portrait of Ramadan in the modern Muslim Middle East than the books mentioned previously. Describing Ramadan as a "spiritual and gastronomic event," *Medieval Cuisine* portrays days of restraint followed by nights of lavish feasting on the most refined dishes possible. This mixture of solemnity and good cheer is appropriate, according to *Medieval Cuisine*, because the fasting of Ramadan is an act of obedience and gratitude to God but not a penance. *Medieval Cuisine* traces the origins of many Middle Eastern dishes to the period between the ninth and 13th centuries, noting that Islam possesses the richest heritage of medieval cookbooks in the world.

*Medieval Cuisine* frequently links particular Muslim culinary customs, from eating with the right hand to fondness for particular foods, to the example of Muhammad. For instance, Muhammad was reputedly fond of *tharid*. Originally an austere dish of stale bread moistened by broth, *tharid* evolved into a number of versions enriched with cheese and meat, in which the bread resembles dumplings. Various versions of *tharid* are provided along with many other dishes of medieval origin in the second half of the book.

## GUIDES TO CREATING A MUSLIM HOME

NATION OF ISLAM leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD's *How to Eat to Live*, a two-volume series published in the 1960s and 1970s, offers advice for self-transformation through diet. The dietary advice corresponds to the recommendations of the Nation of Islam. It urges readers to avoid pork but also to avoid the traditional foods of African Americans in the southern United States, especially sweet potatoes and collard greens. Aubrey Muhammad's *Muslim Cooking with Muhammad: Muslim Cookbook, Nutrition, and Health Guide* updated these recommendations with new nutritional information in 2003. Like its predecessor, *Muslim Cooking with Muhammad* recommends eating lightly, preferably one meal a day. Both books advocate creating an alternate Muslim culture in the United States.

Other guides to creating a Muslim home offer advice on preserving immigrant cultures in the United States. In *The Arab Table* (2005), for instance, May Bsisu provides counsel to non-Muslims curious about Islam and to Muslims lacking the cultural or culinary knowledge to produce traditional meals. She laments the decline among Arab Americans of the custom of serving *mughli*, an aromatic rice pudding spiced with caraway and anise, at a *Mubarakah*, the celebration of the birth of a child. Calling for a return to this tradition, she provides a menu for the *Mubarakah*, including oregano cakes, cheese rolls, and date fingers as well as the *mughli*.

*The Arab Table* also offers extensive directions for observing Ramadan, including explicit directions for shopping before Ramadan, preparing food, and storing it. *The Arab Table* details the rhythms of preparing and consuming a meal after fasting all day. She warns readers not to take a rushed meal and notes that the meal should be interrupted by the *magrib*, or "evening prayers." *The Arab Table* includes extensive menus for *iftar*, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha, the feast that marks the end of the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Like *The Arab Table*, Huma Siddiqui's *Jasmine in Her Hair* (2003) combines personal memoir with instructions for recreating traditions at home. Siddiqui was raised in Pakistan but moved to the United States with her family. *Jasmine in Her Hair* devotes an entire chapter to religious and marriage customs in Pakistan. In addition to Ramadan, it describes the celebration of Shab-e-Barat, a holiday on the 15th day of the eighth month of the Islamic calendar, when God judges everyone's actions over the previous year. She recommends sweets for good luck, especially *halwas*, a fudgelike confection made of milk boiled down to a paste with sugar, often flavored with sweet vegetables such as carrots or with grains and nuts.

While Bsisu and Siddiqui attempt to preserve customs in which religious tradition mingles with customs, other cookbooks represent a new Muslim-American culture. Kathleen Seidel's *Serving the Guest: A Sufi Cookbook* (1999) introduces the reader to a version of the Muslim mystical practice of



SUFISM. *Serving the Guest* treats the preparation and consumption of food as a path to various spiritual states. Almost uniquely among Muslim cookbooks, it recommends vegetarianism. Its cuisine is pan-Islamic, including dishes from the Middle East, India, and Indonesia. In fact, only the foods of the United States are underrepresented in a volume that stresses the exotic and oriental.

By contrast, Corry Habbas's *Sensational Eid Sweets* (2004) contains recipes in the spirit of Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian cuisines but adapted to American tastes and ingredients. Desserts commonly feature white chocolate chips, for instance. Habbas, who describes herself as having "reverted" to Islam, also includes typically American muffins and quickbreads, sometimes enhanced with rosewater. *Sensational Eid Sweets* features a Muslim interpretation of a gingerbread house: a mosque made of biscotti, a traditionally Italian dry cookie, and meringue, a frosting made of beaten egg whites and sugar. This confection is intended to teach children about Islamic architecture. By mingling the cuisines of various immigrant cultures with American ingredients and culinary conditions, both *Serving the Guest* and *Sensational Eid Sweets* probably point to future trends in Muslim-American cookbooks.

Sonja Spear

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**cooking** See FOOD.

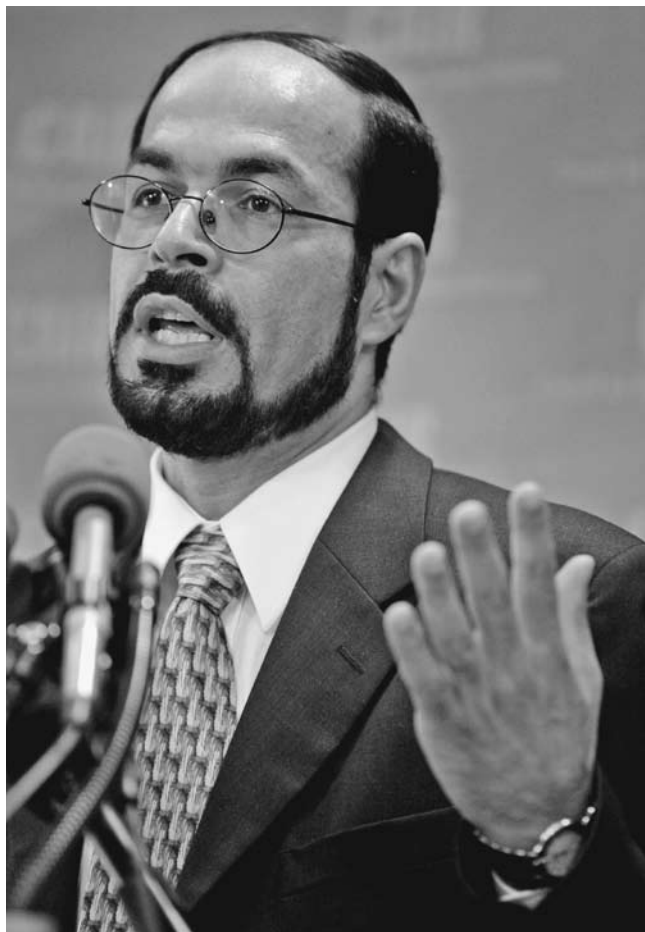
**Cooper v. Pate** See LAW.

#### Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

The Council on American-Islamic Relations, or CAIR, is a leading Muslim-American public advocacy group that defends the civil rights of Muslim Americans, challenges anti-Muslim STEREOTYPES, and seeks to build stronger ties between non-Muslims and Muslims in the United States. Founded in 1994, CAIR grew in the early 2000s to include approximately 30 chapters around the country. In 2009, cofounder Nihad Awad led the organization as executive director, while North Carolina state senator Larry Shaw served as chair of the board of directors. Each chapter also had an independent board of directors and a local director. Its 2006 operating budget was \$2.75 million, and the organization raised \$2.85 million in donations, largely from the 10,000 people who attended meetings and banquets held in more than 20 American cities.

CAIR has scored several notable victories in its campaigns to fight the stereotyping of Muslims and Islam in film, television, print journalism, and other media. In 1996, for example, the organization helped to convince publisher Simon & Schuster to withdraw the publication of a religion textbook that presented the prophet Muhammad as a violent murderer. Since then, CAIR has issued more than 570 "action alerts" using its Web site and the INTERNET to rally Muslims and non-Muslims to protest defamation, write legislators with their concerns, and also thank those in media and government who have been sensitive to Muslim-American issues. In 2008, for example, one action alert asked members to write to the Fox network thanking them for airing "Mypods and Broomsticks," an episode of *The Simpsons* that sympathetically portrayed the discrimination faced by a Muslim family after they moved to the fictional town of Springfield.

In reaction to the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, CAIR took out a full-page advertisement in the *Washington Post* on September 16 stating that "American Muslims unequivocally condemn these vicious and cowardly acts of terrorism." Later it issued a 68-page report, last updated in 2007, that detailed Muslim-American and foreign Muslim denunciations of the 9/11 attacks and attackers. On



Nihad Awad, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, holds a press conference on September 22, 2004, to ask that the U.S. government explain why musician Yusuf Islam, a British-Muslim citizen formerly known as Cat Stevens, was denied entry to the United States. (Jason Reed/Reuters/Landov)

December 13, 2001, CAIR also issued a statement that Osama bin Laden was complicit in the attacks, challenging the conspiracy theory that al-Qaeda was not involved in the incident. In 2004, CAIR also launched an extensive “Not in the Name of Islam” antiterrorism campaign that featured a public service announcement by prominent Muslim-American leader SIRAJ WAHHAJ (1950– ).

In advocating for the rights of Muslims, CAIR has sought to raise awareness in a variety of ways. In addition to its action alerts that call for Muslims and others to write letters or make phone calls, CAIR has encouraged Muslim Americans to report discrimination on its Web site. Since 1996, it has issued an annual report called *The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States*. The 2008 report, for example, notes that complaints against police discrimination declined by 42 percent, perhaps indicating that authorities had become more culturally proficient in dealing with Muslim people. CAIR has sought

to increase cultural sensitivity among non-Muslims who deal with Muslims by issuing a series of guides for HEALTH CARE providers, PRISON officials, law enforcement officers, educators, and employers. Finally, the organization has offered to provide information on Islam, including a free volume of the QUR’AN, to all interested parties.

CAIR has also provided tools to Muslim-American community members and leaders to advocate for their own rights. Its “community tool kit,” for example, asks Muslim-American leaders to develop a list of attorneys who are qualified to respond to discrimination, to create positive relationships with law enforcement officials, to seek out contact with politicians, to meet with school principals, and to become involved with local INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS and minority groups. CAIR’s Web site includes extensive information on how to contact members of Congress and how to register to vote.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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#### Council on American-Islamic Relations “The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States” (2005)

*In the first decade of the 21st century, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Muslim-American public affairs group, sought to raise awareness about the violent backlash against Muslim Americans that resulted from the al-Qaeda attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001. It also fought what it believed were violations of Muslim-American civil rights at the hands of the U.S. government. The targeted deportation of Arab and Muslim foreign visitors and the increased surveillance terrorized Muslim Americans, as several community activists put it. CAIR joined with the American Civil Liberties Union and Human Rights Watch, among other rights organizations, to oppose what they characterized, in the report below, as the secret roundups of Muslims and the “dragnets” of Attorney General John Ashcroft. They became participants in a venerable American tradition—the struggle for individual rights in the face of the state’s encroaching power.*



Nearly four years removed from the 9/11 terror attacks, the greatest tragedy to befall our nation in modern history, our country has learned certain lessons that will hopefully lead us to a stronger, safer and more vibrant society for people of all races, faiths and cultures.

Since the 9/11 attacks, the most disturbing legal trend is the growing disparity in how American Muslims are being treated under the law on many different levels.

In order to fully understand the status of civil rights in the post-9/11 era, it is essential that this report offer a documented historical overview of major federal law enforcement initiatives, high-profile national cases and statistical evidence of anti-Muslim discrimination in the United States, particularly those incidents that occurred during the last calendar year of 2004.

In 2004, CAIR processed a total of 1,522 incident reports of civil rights cases compared to 1,019 cases reported to CAIR in 2003. This constitutes a 49 percent increase in the reported cases of harassment, violence and discriminatory treatment from 2003 and marks the highest number of Muslim civil rights cases ever reported to CAIR in our eleven year history.

In addition, CAIR received 141 reports of actual and potential violent anti-Muslim hate crimes, a 52 percent increase from the 93 reports received in 2003.

Overall, 10 states alone accounted for almost 79 percent of all reported incidents to CAIR in 2004. These ten states include: California (20.17%), New York (10.11%), Arizona (9.26%), Virginia (7.16%), Texas (6.83%), Florida (6.77%), Ohio (5.32%), Maryland (5.26%), New Jersey (4.53%) and Illinois (2.96%).

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### Background and Findings

In the months directly following 9/11, Attorney General John Ashcroft, using his powers under section 412 of the now infamous USA PATRIOT Act, rounded up and imprisoned well over 1,200 Muslim and Arab men based solely on pretextual immigration violations. The most disconcerting fact about these mass round-ups was the fact that the Justice Department refused to disclose the detainees' identities, give them access to lawyers or allow them to have contact with their families.

In April 2003, Inspector General Glenn A. Fine reported that at least 1,200 men from predominantly Muslim and Arab countries were detained by law enforcement officials nationwide. An August 2002 Human Rights Watch report documents cases of prolonged detention without any charge, denial of access to bond release, interfer-

ence with detainees' right to legal counsel and unduly harsh conditions of confinement for the over 1,200 detainees. Georgetown University law professor David Cole said that, "Thousands were detained in this blind search for terrorists without any real evidence of terrorism, and ultimately without netting virtually any terrorists of any kind."

In addition to the indiscriminate immigrant dragnet after September 11, several high profile cases against American Muslims further stigmatized the American Muslim community.

For example, after spending seventy-six days in solitary confinement and being labeled a 'spy' in most media circles, where can Army chaplain and West Point graduate Captain James Yee go to regain his respectability after being falsely accused of treasonous crimes that could have resulted in the death penalty? Where might Oregon attorney Brandon Mayfield reclaim his good name after being falsely linked by the FBI to the Madrid train bombings of March 11, 2004? How does Sami Al-Hussayen resume a normal life with his family after being found not guilty of 'aiding terrorists' while serving as a webmaster and exercising his First Amendment right to free speech?

The American Muslim community has always categorically condemned acts of terrorism and believes that those who break the law should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. However, in order to remain consistent with the constitutional hallmarks of due process and 'equal protection' under the law, it is essential that our law enforcement agencies enforce and apply the law in a consistent manner to all people rather than selectively target people based on their religious or ethnic affiliation.

It is time once again for American society to reclaim its true legal tradition and judge a person on the criminality of their acts, not on the color of his skin or the religion to which she adheres.

### The Dragnets of John Ashcroft

Under United States immigration law, an 'absconder' is defined as an "alien who, though subject to . . . [deportation], has failed to surrender for removal or to otherwise comply with the order." According to a January 2002 memorandum sent to federal immigration and law enforcement officials, the Deputy Attorney General of the United States estimated that there are approximately 314,000 absconders, or deportable illegal aliens, living in

the United States today. Of these 314,000, only about 6,000, less than 2 percent, originate from Muslim or Arab nations. Although over 90 percent of absconders are from Latin American countries, the Justice Department began selectively targeting absconders only from predominantly Muslim and Arab countries in the past few years. However, their selective targeting of Muslims and Arabs after September 11 bore almost no criminal fruits. By the end of May 2002, the Justice Department admitted that out of 314,000 absconders, only 585 had been located. More embarrassingly, not a single terrorist had been apprehended.

Whereas all Americans have been greatly affected by 9/11 and its aftermath, young males from Arab and Muslim countries have been most profoundly affected by the dragnet conducted by the Department of Justice in our ongoing “war on terror.” In addition to the law enforcement dragnets conducted by the Justice Department after 9/11, certain congressional legislation has also been passed which has stirred great debate in all American circles as to how to best balance national security interests whilst still safeguarding the civil liberties guaranteed to every American by our Constitution.

### The Secret Roundup

Glenn A. Fine, Inspector General for the Department of Justice, officially reported that at least 1,200 men from predominantly Muslim and Arab countries were detained by law enforcement officials nationwide within two months of 9/11. The Inspector General conceded in his official report that a senior officer in the Office of Public Affairs stopped reporting the cumulative count of detainees after 1,200 because the “statistics became too confusing.”

In August 2002, Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a 95-page report, entitled *Presumption of Guilt*, which documented cases of prolonged detention without any charge, denial of access to bond release, interference with detainees’ right to legal counsel, and unduly harsh conditions of confinement for the over 1,200 detainees. HRW’s findings were later confirmed by Inspector General Fine’s report, which also identified a pattern of “physical and verbal abuse” by correctional staff at the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) in Brooklyn, New York.

The September 11 detainees comprised citizens from more than 20 countries. The largest number,

254 (or 33 percent), were from Pakistan, more than double the number of any other country. The second largest number (111) was from Egypt and there were also substantial numbers of detainees from Jordan, Turkey, Yemen and India. The ages of the detainees varied, but by far the greatest number, 479 (or 63 percent), were between the ages of 26 and 40.

The fruits of these legally suspect and egregiously overarching dragnets was succinctly summed up by Georgetown University law professor David Cole when he said that, “Thousands were detained in this blind search for terrorists without any real evidence of terrorism, and ultimately without netting virtually any terrorists of any kind.”

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### Sample Cases [of Civil Rights Abuses]

March 21, 2003—A Muslim American family of Palestinian descent became victim of property damage when their van was bombed outside their home in the Chicago suburb of Burbank, Illinois. The individual responsible for the crime had been convicted earlier of criminal damage to property in 2001 for vandalizing an Arab-owned furniture store two days after the 9/11 attacks.

December 12, 2003—A Muslim woman was shopping in a New York toy store when a man followed her, verbally accosted and assaulted her. She reported the incident to the police and the attacker was arrested.

March 2, 2004—In San Diego, a man of Portuguese descent was beaten by a group of four white men who mistook him for being Middle Eastern. They yelled racial slurs at him and told him to go back to Iraq.

March 3, 2004—A San Antonio, Texas, man was sentenced to 30 years in prison for setting a series of fires at Muslim-owned convenience stores and other businesses in the city. The County District Attorney referred to the man as a ‘terrorist’ for his connection with another attack against a Muslim-owned business when the arsons began in 2003.

April 24, 2004—A Muslim woman and her son were harassed, threatened and attacked by another woman while shopping in Pennsylvania. The woman yelled that American troops were fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan so that women did not have to dress like her and also hit her with her cart repeatedly. Employees of the store refused



to call security when she requested that they do so and did not assist her in finding a phone to call the police.

May 27, 2004—A Muslim man and his family were verbally harassed by a patron while eating at a restaurant in Florida. The offender called them ‘terrorists’. When the Muslim man complained, the manager elected to remove him from the premises instead of the offender.

June 21, 2004—A Muslim man reported that while riding on a van that runs from New York to his home in Paterson, New Jersey, a group of Latino males harassed him. They hit him on his arm and made comments like, “take the bombs off before I kill you.” The driver did not say anything until they began cursing him in Spanish at which point he asked them to stop.

June 26, 2004—While driving home in Illinois, a Muslim woman was harassed and physically assaulted. Three individuals asked her for a lighter. When she replied that she did not have one, they became angry and said, “Stupid Muslims, F-cking Muslims” as they surrounded her car and repeatedly kicked it. When the victim stepped out of her car to confront them, one of the individuals punched her in the face and tore her *hijab* from her head.

July 14, 2004—A Muslim-owned grocery store was torched and completely destroyed. Anti-Arab slurs that read, “F-ck you Arab” were found spray-painted on the scene.

July 30, 2004—A Muslim woman from New York was soliciting donations on behalf of a charitable organization when she was verbally and physically attacked.

August 13, 2004—A cabbie in New York was punched in the face while driving a cab near Ground Zero after the offender said to him, “You are Muslim.” The offender was drunk and later charged with third degree assault and harassment.

August 23, 2004—In Tucson, Arizona, a Muslim family of Jordanian origin reported that their car was vandalized in the parking lot of their apartment building. Allegedly the car’s tires were slashed and the windshield was smashed. A note taped to the vehicle read, “You are not welcome here. Go back home you stupid f-ckers.”

September 12, 2004—In California, a Muslim man and his children placed an order at a drive through Burger King, when he overheard an employee say to his co-workers, “Look, Osama Bin Laden” is here.

October 27, 2004—A community member filed a report of graffiti on a METRA stop in Illinois that read, “Kill all Muslims B4 they kill U.”

October 29, 2004—Two Staten Island men were arrested and charged with hate crimes for allegedly hitting a Muslim student at Stony Brook University while shouting anti-Muslim slurs. Suffolk County police charged the 19 and 20-year old with criminal trespass in the second degree and aggravated harassment in the second degree as a hate crime. The two men allegedly knocked on a student’s door and awoke him at about 4 a.m. The victim said he opened the door and the two men went into his room and began throwing items at him, hitting him and overturning furniture, all the while calling him anti-Muslim names.

December 1, 2004—In Chesterfield, Virginia, a Sikh-owned gas station was destroyed by fire and anti-Muslim graffiti was found on a nearby trash container and shed. The fire is being investigated as an arson and possible hate crime.

December 21, 2004—A fire that took place at a used car lot in Nebraska is being investigated as arson and a hate crime. Swastikas were spray-painted on the walls. Most of the graffiti involves derogatory references to Latinos and Arabs.



Source: Council on American-Islamic Relations. “The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States,” 2005. Available online. URL: <http://www.cair-net.org/asp/2005CivilRightsReport.pdf>. Accessed April 10, 2006.

## Crane, Robert Dickson (1929– )

### *Muslim-American ambassador-designate*

Robert Dickson Crane was nominated U.S. ambassador to the United Arab Emirates in 1981. Though President Ronald Reagan later withdrew the nomination due to opposition from Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Crane was never confirmed, he was the first Muslim American to be appointed an ambassador to a foreign nation. He is also a lawyer, author of numerous books on foreign policy, and an expert in Muslim-American studies.

Robert Dickson Crane was born on March 26, 1929, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. A student at Harvard Law School, Crane became an expert on Soviet space strategy and psychostrategic warfare. He published several books and articles on such topics and in 1962 was instrumental in the establishment of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. In 1963, former vice president Richard Nixon asked Crane

to become a foreign policy adviser. After Nixon was elected president in 1968, Crane was appointed deputy director of planning for the National Security Council, a post he held for one day until he was fired by National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, who, according to Crane, disagreed with his foreign policy views.

In the 1970s, Crane traveled to the Arabian Gulf, where he became an adviser to the government of Bahrain. His experiences there prompted him to study Islamic religion more closely. In 1980, he has said, he became Muslim after seeing Sudanese leader Hasan al-Turabi preach and pray at an Islamic affairs conference in New Hampshire. Crane's public conversion drew attention, since he was a white American with 17th-century New England roots who had formally served in the White House; two of his cousins were Republican members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

In 1981, President Ronald Reagan appointed Crane ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. Though it was not the first time a Muslim had served as the nation's top diplomat in a foreign country—that honor went to ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB, who became a Muslim during his time as U.S. counsel in the Philippines in the late 1880s—Crane was the first Muslim appointed to an ambassadorial post. Crane brought both Muslim credentials and his experiences as a

cold warrior under Nixon to the struggle against the Soviet Union and communism. It was thought that Crane's excellent relations with Gulf Arab states might be of use as the United States sought allies, including Muslim activist groups, in the covert war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Secretary of State Alexander Haig reportedly opposed this strategy, however, and had Crane replaced.

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Crane turned his attention to Muslim-American activism and worked for the ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C., the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT, and the AMERICAN MUSLIM COUNCIL, which has defended Muslim Americans against discrimination and sought to form Muslim-American consensus on domestic and international political issues. In addition, Crane was founding director of the Muslim American Bar Association.

*Edward E. Curtis IV with Britney J. McMahan*

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**Cyber Islam** See INTERNET.



### **Dar al-Islam community (New Mexico)**

Dar al-Islam, or the “Abode of Islam,” is a New Mexico nonprofit organization and community cofounded in 1979 by Nuridin Durkee, an American convert to Islam; Sahl Kabbani, a Saudi businessman; and Dr. Abdullah Naseef, former secretary-general of the World Muslim League. It was formed to establish an Islamic community in which Muslims would live their daily lives in accordance with Islamic religious requirements and thus become a model community for others.

The founders selected the picturesque but remote town of Abiquiu in northern New Mexico, building their utopian community on an 8,500-acre ranch. A renowned Egyptian architect, Hassan Fathy, designed and oversaw the construction of the exquisite adobe mosque and Islamic school that form the core of the compound. The late Saudi king Khalid ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz and his family provided the initial financing to enable the founders to pay legal fees, purchase the land, build the mosque, and begin construction of the school. According to the *New York Times*, the initial 1,200 acres was purchased for \$1.3 million. The main buildings were completed in 1981, and Dar al-Islam opened in 1982.

By 1986, the Islamic school had seven full-time teachers serving nearly 60 students, and the community began hosting workshops to train both Muslim and non-Muslim teachers about Islamic traditions. Local public schools conducted field trips to the community, which was becoming a resource for American students interested in Islam and the Arab world. Continued financing came primarily from member-owned entrepreneurial businesses that rented space from the foundation as well as private sources driven by the Muslim concept of *zakat*, an organized and obligatory type of PHILANTHROPY anchored in Islamic law.

Although Dar al-Islam was imbedded in the world community of Islam, it was also thoroughly American in its original vision, taking its inspiration from 19th-century intentional communities such as the Shakers and New Harmony, Indiana. By 1990, however, the project suffered from attrition, partly due to an economic downturn and partly due to

the rustic but difficult lifestyle that came with the remoteness of the location. Walter ‘Abdur Ra’uf Declerk, a Belgian-born Muslim convert and Dar al-Islam’s administrator, helped restructure the original vision in the early 1990s by selling off most of the original land and creating an endowment that would help fund the current operation. By 1996, only eight families remained, and Dar al-Islam focused its attention on hosting annual retreats and teaching institutes for educators. Its introductory class on Islam for non-Muslims was noteworthy for its use of primary source material and cultural immersion.

The new focus served Dar al-Islam well, especially after the SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, attacks that cast Islamic religion and Muslims in a negative light. Careful to identify itself with mainstream Sunni Islam, the organization articulated a self-consciously moderate and tolerant interpretation of Islam and focused on helping non-Muslim Americans understand Islam while encouraging Muslims to deepen their commitment to religious practice. By the end of the first decade of the 21st century, Dar al-Islam continued to offer teaching workshops in addition to hosting women’s retreats, youth camps, and family retreats.

*Patricia Power*

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**Darul Islam** See AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS; AL-AMIN, JAMIL ABDULLAH.

## dating

Dating in the United States has come to represent a complex, complicated, and modern phenomenon that arose with the notion of youth culture in the 20th century. What many Muslims in the United States have understood by dating has differed from the common definition of the word, though Muslims have also disagreed among themselves about the meaning. Since many Muslims have traditionally viewed marriage as the only proper outlet for romantic relationships between the sexes, dating for Muslim Americans often came to be defined as a non-physically intimate avenue for getting to know a potential spouse, frequently involving a chaperone—what Muslim-American blogger Asma Hasan has referred to as *halal*, or “permissible dating.” This style of dating is also practiced by Muslims abroad, although some socially conservative Muslims find even the Islamic form of dating to be haram, or prohibited.

The first examples of dating among Muslims in the United States occurred among AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES, the first wave of Muslims to enter the country in the colonial era. Such practices among African slaves, however, fell under the category of dating only in the sense that dating is a form of courtship. It is unknown to what extent polygamy took place among slaves, though the biographies of enslaved Muslim-American ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (ca. 1762–1829) and other Muslims indicate that it did occur. As slave masters broke apart families through the sale of mothers, fathers, and children, it was common for slaves to take on new spouses, adopt each other’s children, and take other actions in order to preserve a sense of community. Some form of dating must surely have occurred among the Bengali sailors who married non-Muslim women in NEW YORK CITY and New Orleans and the Punjabi agricultural workers who married Mexican-American women in California in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, though there is little information on such patterns. ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS in the same period may have dated in some modest way if they married a non-Muslim, though many Muslim men had marriages arranged for them in Syria, and some women traveled to America as brides without having met their future husbands.

The regulation of modern dating as a part of Muslim-American religious practice may have begun in the 1930s and 1940s with the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI). In this African-American Muslim movement that stressed middle-class values of sexual propriety and discipline, strict rules banning fornication were enforced by the all-male Fruit of Islam and the all-female MUSLIM GIRLS TRAINING. The NOI encouraged male and female members to marry one another—a practice that produced several notable unions, including that of Betty Shabazz and MALCOLM X. According to NOI rules, members were not supposed to date, though they could

gather with members of the opposite sex in mixed company during temple activities and in other public settings. Of course, many members ignored these rules, but if they were found to be fornicating, they were suspended or expelled from their local mosque.

Like NOI followers, Muslim Americans more generally have never monolithically adhered to any one set of dating rules, and Muslim-American notions about what constitutes proper Islamic behavior can change for an individual throughout the stages of his or her life. For example, one DETROIT couple, Mohsen and Lila Amen, interviewed by scholar Sally Howell in 1998, explained that while their dating led to marriage, they considered some of their behavior, in retrospect, to be inappropriate. The couple first met in 1973, becoming acquainted with one another while going out to nightclubs, where they would also consume alcoholic drinks, but they were chaperoned on their dates by Lila’s sister, who attended the nightclubs with them. They married two years later and eventually stopped going out to clubs and drinking. Their story represents a typical example of the complicated and idiosyncratic nature of Muslim-American dating practices, which may have revolved around preserving certain Islamic cultural customs, such as abstaining from premarital sex, while disregarding others, such as the prohibition against drinking alcohol.

A few Muslim Americans have suggested that *mut’a*, or the institution of “temporary marriage,” is one solution to the problems posed by dating. Primarily a Shi’a practice, *mut’a*, which originated in the seventh century during the caliphate of ‘Umar, allows a man to marry a woman for a fixed, relatively short period of time. If any children are conceived during this period, the man is obligated to provide for the child, but *mut’a* has been largely rejected by Sunni scholars of the SHARI‘A since the classical era. In 1989, Sheikh Abdullatif Berri, an imam from Dearborn, Michigan, published a book on the topic entitled *Temporary Marriage in Islam* in response to a growing curiosity among a local Lebanese Shi’a community. The book was made available in both Arabic and English. However, despite its religious legality, temporary marriage has never enjoyed widespread support among SHI‘A MUSLIM AMERICANS.

While there has been a shortage of studies conducted on modern Muslim perceptions of dating, some trends have been identified. For example, studies have indicated a double standard when it comes to Muslim parents’ enforcement of socializing with the opposite sex: Sons have often been given more freedom than daughters to socialize and mix with members of the opposite sex. For example, in Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Adair Lummis’s 1987 study *Islamic Values in the United States*, the authors report one Arab man saying, “I don’t have as much problem with boys dating girls as I do with girls dating.” Despite ambivalence from



certain corners of the Muslim-American community, opportunities for Muslim men and women to meet one another in religiously sanctioned ways increased in the late 20th century. Major Islamic organizations such as the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA), the American Society of Muslim Advancement, and MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION across the country have organized formal venues for Muslim men and women to socialize, often with marriage as the explicit aim. In 2006, for example, the ISNA conference in Chicago offered two such gatherings, with up to 150 men and 150 women participating each day at a price of \$55 per person. Each table sat 10 people, and the men rotated every seven minutes. Participants had the opportunity to exchange contact information, and many attendees reported that they felt optimistic about finding a spouse by participating. The downsides of dating have also been explored at ISNA conferences. One seminar promised helpful hints for Muslim families struggling to “save” their children from the institution.

Modern forms of Muslim dating and prescriptions for dating have increased in the past several decades. The most recent trend in Muslim-American dating can be found on the INTERNET, where numerous online Muslim networking services such as “Single Muslim,” “Sufi Love Match,” and “Muslima” cater to both American and international audiences and boast hundreds of thousands of members. While many of these sites have been explicitly established as avenues for marriage, others have offered their participants the chance to do online dating.

Elliott Bazzano

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### Daudi Bohras

The Daudi Bohras are a relatively small religious group of SHI’A MUSLIM AMERICANS. The word *Bohra* is derived from a Gujarati word for trading, while the term *Daudi* refers to the group’s 27th leader, Daud ibn Qutubshah. While most Shi’a Muslims are Twelvers, or Ithna’ashari Shi’a, who trace their roots to Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon, a minority are ISMA’ILI MUSLIM AMERICANS, most of whom trace their roots to South Asia and Africa. Isma’ilis are further divided into two main groups: the larger Nizari Isma’ilis and the smaller Bohras, who number as many as 25,000 in the United States and Canada. A subgroup of the Bohras, the Daudi Bohras have found success in business, medicine, information technologies, and other high-paying professions while actively preserving their religious traditions and native Gujarati language.

Most American Daudi Bohras began immigrating to the United States after the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 liberalized U.S. immigration policy. Though many came in the 1970s, it was not until the late 20th century that they established a number of their own MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS. In 1982, Daudi Bohras in Detroit erected their first mosque in the United States. By the beginning of the 21st century, CHICAGO, HOUSTON, LOS ANGELES, SEATTLE, and NEW YORK CITY had large mosques, community centers, and Islamic schools where full-time teachers, supplemented by volunteers, were appointed to educate youth. American Daudi Bohras have also continued to cultivate close ties with Bohras in other countries and have frequently hosted Syedna Mohammad Burhanuddin, the *da’i*, or “leader” of the global Daudi Bohra community, on his official visits to the United States.

According to anthropologist Jonah Blank, the Daudi Bohras represent what most Americans would find to be a paradox. On the one hand, they have embraced information technologies, encouraged their children to attend secular schools, and practiced relative gender equality in their communities. On the other hand, they are highly conservative in their religious practices. They wear Islamic DRESS that distinguishes them from other Americans, and many have refused to participate in any transaction that involves interest, thus observing the traditional Islamic prohibition against usury.

Like other Shi’a Muslims, the Daudi Bohras also commemorate the martyrdom of Husayn, the grandson of the prophet Muhammad, at Karbala in 680 c.e. This event, called ASHURA, brings together members of the community to mourn that day in the same way that some Christians ritually lament the crucifixion of Jesus on Good Friday. Daudi Bohras observe a complete fast and beat their breasts in sympathy for themselves and the martyred Husayn.

Daudi Bohras have established community institutions to provide members with business counseling, dispute res-

olution, and interest-free loans for businesses and homes. Community mental health institutions have offered marriage and youth counseling in an attempt to address divorce, drug use, and other problems that many immigrants associate with mainstream American culture. Leaders have also encouraged Daudi Bohras to marry within the community. In all these cases, many Daudi Bohras have aimed to adjust to American life while preserving their religious and cultural heritage.

*Edward E. Curtis IV with Ali Qutbuddin*

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## demographics

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, there was budding awareness among policy makers, scholars, and members of the general population that Muslim Americans were growing in number. Though Muslim Americans had contributed to the making of American society since the colonial era, there was also a mounting sense among non-Muslims that Muslim Americans were shaping the life of the nation in even more significant ways. Understanding their emerging political clout, their socioeconomic characteristics, and their cultural attitudes became central to several groups: businesses who wished to sell consumer items in this niche market, civic groups that hoped to dispel misunderstanding among non-Muslims and encourage social integration among Muslims, and government agencies wanting to understand the nature of their attitudes toward the United States.

However, since the U.S. government does not keep track of Americans' religious identities in the U.S. Census, there was no single authoritative source to determine the number of Muslim Americans. The dozen or so national studies that tracked the number of Muslims and their demographic characteristics—their average age, national origin, class, race, and ethnicity—in the late 20th and early 21st centuries reported very different results. Muslim-American sponsored polls estimated that there were anywhere from 5 to 10 million Muslim Americans, while non-Muslim polls estimated the number of Muslim Americans to be 2 to 3 million.

### BEFORE 1965

The majority of Muslim Americans in the 18th and 19th centuries traced their ethnic roots and origins to West Africa. Most were either slaves or freed slaves. Historian Michael Gomez has estimated that of the 481,000 Africans who were brought to British North America, 255,000—more than half—came from areas in which Muslims lived or even ruled. Thus, he estimated that thousands or perhaps tens of thousands of African Americans may have had Muslim upbringings. It is important to keep in mind that the total population of the United States in 1790 was only 4 million, of which 700,000 persons were enslaved. Thus, even if there were only thousands or tens of thousands of Muslims in the new nation, they still would have counted for a statistically significant minority.

The next wave of Muslim immigration, which occurred from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, was from South Asia and the Ottoman Empire. Most of the Ottoman subjects were ethnic Arabs, and it is generally agreed among historians of Arab America that only 10 percent were Muslim, suggesting that from the 1800s until 1965, approximately 20,000 Arab Muslims immigrated to the United States. Some regions and towns had much larger percentages of Muslims than others. For example, through careful analysis of U.S. Census records and deeds, one historian has shown that the Arab-American population of NORTH DAKOTA from 1900 until 1950 was at least 30 percent Muslim.

The first systematic attempt by Muslim Americans themselves to conduct a census was made by the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (FIA) in 1959. According to that study, 187,112 households in the United States and Canada were Muslim. Since each of these Muslim households held an average of six people (two parents and four children), the total number of Muslim Americans was estimated to be more than 1 million. Such a number was surely high, according to many social scientists of the time, and the methodology of the study lacked rigor.

One way to estimate the number of Muslims who immigrated to the United States during this era is to examine the total number of people who came from other nations with Muslim populations and then make educated guesses about how many of those people were Muslim. Using this method, political scientist Mohamed Nimer has claimed that between 1820 and 1965, a total of 76,990 Muslims immigrated from Europe, Africa, and Asia.

### AFTER 1965

Most studies of the Muslim-American population in the United States regard the passage of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 and its lifting of immigration quotas based on national origin as a watershed event in the history of Muslim America. According to some studies, a majority of Muslims

living in the United States by the close of the 20th century either came to the United States after 1965 or had parents who did so. From 1966 to 1997, according to U.S. government statistics, approximately 2.8 million people immigrated to the United States from parts of the world with substantial Muslim populations. Of these, according to Nimer, perhaps 1.2 million were Muslim.

This statistic, however, explains only how many Muslims immigrated to the United States from 1966 to 1997. It neither counts those WHITE MUSLIM AMERICANS, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, and LATINA/O MUSLIM AMERICANS who converted to Islam nor those Muslim Americans who were born and raised Muslim in the United States. By the end of the 20th century, thousands of African Americans could trace their religious identity three generations back to the 1920s and 1930s. In a similar way, some Muslim Americans who traced their roots to the Middle East and South Asia or who married into a family that did so also claimed a multigenerational Muslim-American heritage. Determining the number of indigenous Muslims proved especially difficult.

In the first decade of the 21st century, and especially after SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, there was a near frenzy among the media to determine how many Muslims were living in the United States. No consensus emerged; estimates ranged from less than 2 million to more than 8 million. A 2007 survey by the Pew Research Center entitled "Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream" relied on the responses of 1,050 Muslim Americans who were interviewed. According to extrapolations based on the survey, there were 2.35 million Muslims in the United States. This number was immediately challenged by most Muslim-American activists and some scholars, who questioned the methodologies used in the survey. They said a range of 3 to 4 million was far more accurate.

#### BEYOND POPULATION

The search for a precise number of Muslim Americans, some scholars added, was only one aspect of the study of Muslim-American demographics. Several scholars pointed out that the obsession with the precise number of Muslim Americans obscures the importance of Muslim Americans, whatever their number, as a vulnerable, visible, and consequential population. Among the more critical questions to be asked, according to the authors of the Pew survey, was: What kinds of sociological diversity can be found in the Muslim-American community?

The Pew poll found that 65 percent of Muslim Americans were foreign born, while 35 percent were born in the United States. Those who studied African-American Muslims immediately questioned this finding, arguing that the model on which the study was based did not account sufficiently for the undercounting of African Americans—a population that has been consistently undercounted in most polls and

surveys. Despite such criticism, the poll did reveal important data about the population that was surveyed.

According to the poll, Muslim Americans were generally younger than other Americans. "More than half of adult Muslims (56 percent) are between the ages of 18 and 39," the report concluded, whereas "in the general public, just 40 percent of adults are in this category." Three out of 10 Muslim Americans were between the ages of 18 and 29, while only 21 percent of the general American population was in that age category. There were also more Muslim-American men than women by a margin of 54 percent to 46 percent, reflecting the immigration of Muslim men from abroad to the United States to seek employment and educational opportunities in greater numbers than women.

Muslim Americans were also ethnically and racially diverse, with no single ethnic or racial group constituting a majority. In terms of their ethnic diversity, 24 percent described themselves as having an Arab origin, 20 percent said they were African American, 18 percent reported a South Asian origin, and the rest said they were white American, Iranian, Hispanic, European, African, Southeast Asian, Central Asian, or South American. Regarding race, 38 percent of Muslim Americans described themselves as white, reflecting the preference of the majority of Arab Americans to identify themselves as white. Approximately 24 percent of Muslims Americans identified as black, 20 percent identified as Asian, and 16 percent said that there were racially mixed.

As a whole, Muslim Americans reported the same education levels of non-Muslim Americans. Approximately 25 percent of all Americans reported that they had completed a college degree, including those who went to graduate school, while 24 percent of Muslim Americans said that they had done so. The percentage of high school graduates among Muslim and non-Muslim Americans was also substantially the same, though slightly more Muslim Americans never finished high school: 21 percent for Muslims and 16 percent for non-Muslims.

The proportion of Muslim households making more than \$100,000 annually was 16 percent, which was substantially the same as the 17 percent of non-Muslim households earning this amount. This finding surprised some, since a number of earlier polls found Muslim Americans to have somewhat higher incomes than the general population. For example, a 2001 poll conducted by Project MAPS, or Muslims in the American Public Square, at Georgetown University found that 28 percent of Muslim Americans reported an annual income of more than \$75,000, while only 17 percent of the general population did. The difference between the two findings probably reflected a difference in who was being surveyed. The 2001 MAPS poll included many more South Asian Americans than the 2007 Pew poll did. Because South Asians are among the richest ethnic groups in the United States and represented a larger portion of the total Muslim-American population in the MAPS

poll, the average income of Muslim Americans as a whole was determined to be larger.

The 2007 Pew survey also revealed important data about the religious diversity of Muslim Americans. According to the poll, approximately three out of four Muslims (77 percent) said that they had always been Muslim, while approximately one quarter (23 percent) said that they had converted to the faith. Approximately six out of every 10 converts were African Americans. Of the native-born African-American Muslims polled, including converts and those born as Muslims, half identified as Sunni, one-third said that they were “just Muslim,” and 15 percent reported another affiliation, including the NATION OF ISLAM and Shi’a. This finding mirrored the educated guesses of many scholars that the majority of African-American Muslims were Sunni.

One-half of Muslim Americans as a whole identified themselves as SUNNI MUSLIM AMERICANS, while 16 percent said that they were SHI’A MUSLIM AMERICANS. About one-fifth of all Muslim Americans refused to call themselves either Sunni or Shi’a, saying they were “just Muslim,” a response that probably indicated the desire for Muslim unity in the United States. A large majority (86 percent) said that they believed the QUR’AN was the word of God—mirroring 78 percent of Christian Americans who believe that the Bible is the word of God—though 60 percent said that “there is more than one true way to interpret the teachings of Islam.” A minority of Muslim Americans said that they went to mosque to pray on a weekly basis. Four out of 10 reported that they went to mosque every week, a slightly lower rate of attendance than that of Christian Americans, 45 percent of whom said they attended church every week.

### CONCLUSION

While a number of studies have attempted to estimate the number of Muslim Americans and to describe their demographic characteristics, no single survey has been accepted as authoritative. Given the controversial nature of such estimates, it is unlikely that a general consensus will emerge. While various polls have revealed important data about the opinions and characteristics of Muslim Americans, many scholars have claimed that such numbers reveal only a partial picture of the Muslim-American community, whose centrality to the larger story of the United States can be captured only by understanding the individual and collective contributions of Muslim Americans to U.S. society.

*Edward E. Curtis IV*

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## Detroit, Michigan

Detroit, Michigan, has played a central role in the history of Muslims in the United States. It was home to America’s first purpose-built mosque, which opened its doors in 1921; it is the birthplace of the NATION OF ISLAM; and its leaders and institutions were crucial in holding America’s Muslim communities together before the large post-1965 immigration brought millions of new Muslims to the United States. By the 21st century, greater Detroit was home to 56 mosques, including some of the largest and oldest in North America. The city’s Muslims were a vibrant mix of ethnic, racial, and national groups. Arabs and African Americans, the best known of these populations, have been joined by Bosnians and Albanians, African immigrants, Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, and American-born converts. Sunni Muslim Americans and Shi’a Muslim Americans, each with its own array of sectarian and doctrinal tendencies, could be found in all of these ethnic groups. Almost any school of Islamic thought found in America had adherents in Detroit. The city’s Muslims have also been active in local public institutions and in the social and political life of Detroit generally. They have also created effective pan-Muslim institutions that advocate for their civil rights and express their collective interests.

### FROM 1900 TO 1965

Detroit’s first Muslims left traces in area graveyards, where tombstones engraved with the star and crescent and Arabic script date back to the early 1900s, when Muslims were already a community large enough to have special sections set aside for them in cemeteries. These graves belong to Muslim immigrants from Turkey, Albania, Lebanon, Syria, British India, and even China. Mostly itinerant laborers and peddlers and mostly men, the first Muslims paved the way for



immigrant families from the Balkans and greater Syria, who began settling in Detroit in the late 19th century, often alongside Christian immigrants from the same home regions.

In 1914, Henry Ford began offering \$5 for a day's work at his Highland Park assembly line. The burgeoning auto industry attracted tens of thousands of immigrants to Michigan. It also drew American-born workers from the Deep South, including large numbers of African Americans. The foundations of Islam in Detroit were laid primarily by individuals and groups who came to the city during these early labor migrations.

Turks were the first Muslims to organize in Detroit. By 1914, they had created housing cooperatives. In 1920, they joined with local Arabs and Kurds to open a Detroit chapter of Kizilay, a Muslim funeral association already established in New York.

The Arab community, however, was larger and included more families with children. It was ARABIC-speakers who led efforts to build Detroit's first mosque. Called the Moslem Mosque of Highland Park, this institution was the first purpose-built mosque in the United States. It opened its doors in 1921 and was located within blocks of Henry Ford's factory. According to period newspaper accounts, a diverse community of immigrants from India, Mexico, Syria, Arabia, and Turkey attended the mosque's opening day parade, which doubled as an Eid al-Fitr service to celebrate the end of Ramadan. The inaugural ceremonies were led by three imams, or "leaders," each representing a different Muslim tradition. Mufti Mohammed Sadiq, a newly arrived Ahmadiyya missionary from India, delivered the sermon. Imam Hussein Karoub, a Sunni immigrant from what is today Lebanon, was the mosque's official imam (and founder), and Kalil Bazy, a Shi'i Muslim and also Lebanese, served as the religious authority for Detroit's growing population of Lebanese Shi'a.

Mufti Mohammed Sadiq launched *MUSLIM SUNRISE*, an English-language newspaper that promoted his efforts to convert Americans to Islam (and, more specifically, to the Ahmadiyya movement), in 1921, also in Highland Park. Sadiq's Ahmadiyya teachings were at odds with those of Detroit's other Muslims, and he was soon forced to relocate his mission to CHICAGO. Imams Karoub and Bazy, however, stayed in Detroit, leading prayers, teaching the QUR'AN, and marrying and burying the Muslims of Detroit for the next 50 years. They also traveled extensively, performing religious services and establishing smaller Muslim communities across the midwestern states and Canada. Imam Karoub helped establish the Moslem Temple of CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, in the 1930s during one of several pastoral sojourns he undertook from his base in Highland Park.

The Highland Park mosque, beset by financial difficulties and sectarian rifts almost from its inception, shut down within a year of its founding, and the building was eventually sold in 1927. Thereafter, Muslims in Detroit prayed in

groups that were more uniform in their sectarian teachings and ethnic-national makeup. By the 1930s, several immigrant Muslim associations existed in greater Detroit. Turks and Albanians met together in prayer halls and social clubs on the East Side. Arabic speakers had created Muslim associations in Dearborn, Highland Park, and on Hastings Street in Detroit, where SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS and Afghani Muslim Americans also had meeting places. AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, meanwhile, were creating their own Islamic movements in Detroit. The MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America had a presence in the city in the 1920s, and imams Sadiq, Karoub, and others converted many African Americans in Detroit in this same period. Detroit is best known, however, as the birthplace of the Nation of Islam (NOI), a group that, like the Moorish Science Temple, advocated a form of Islam that was specifically geared to address the social, political, and economic needs of African Americans. In 1930, W. D. FARD began preaching his unique mix of Islam and racial uplift in Paradise Valley, Detroit's largest African-American neighborhood. He was joined in 1931 by ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (born Elijah Poole), his most loyal follower and eventual successor, who was appointed to lead the NOI in 1934.

After WORLD WAR II, Muhammad's preaching drew tens of thousands of converts to the movement in Detroit and other urban centers, and the NOI became a religion of national significance. Muhammad's Temple No. 1, formerly the Allah Temple of Islam, on Hastings Street in Detroit was the spiritual and social center of this movement and remained so long after Muhammad moved his headquarters to Chicago in the mid-1930s. NOI teachings on race and the divinity of W. D. Fard, both of which contradicted Sunni Muslim-American doctrines, hindered the development of close ties between the NOI and other Muslims in Detroit, but believers of both traditions often worked, shopped, and studied together. When NOI Temple No. 1 relocated to Linwood Avenue in 1957, it was close to the only non-NOI mosque located within Detroit city limits, the Hajj Samman Abdullah Mosque, which was established in 1947 by a small devout congregation of African-American Sunni Muslims.

While the National Origins Act of 1924 dramatically reduced the number of Muslim immigrants arriving in Detroit and the rest of the country, by the 1950s Detroit's Muslims had nonetheless established several durable, active mosques. The Progressive Arabian Hashemite Society consecrated its facilities in 1937 on Dix Avenue in Dearborn. The American Moslem Society opened a year later just a few blocks away. Both were Syrian-Lebanese mosques, one Shi'i, under the guidance of Kalil Bazy, and the other Sunni, led by Hussein Karoub. The Albanian Moslem Society, organized in 1948, brought the first classically trained Muslim cleric, Imam Vehbi Isma'il, to greater Detroit from al-Azhar University in Cairo.



The Islamic Center of America in Dearborn, Michigan, is one of the most visible mosques in the United States. It is also one of the largest Shi'a mosques. (Bill Pugliano/Getty Images)

Isma'il was joined in 1949 by a second scholar-cleric, Mohammed Jawad Chirri, who was called to Dearborn by the Progressive Arabian Hashemite Society. These two young leaders ushered in a new era of mosque building in Detroit, emphasizing a progressive, modern Islam that shifted the focus of Muslim-American associations from aging immigrants to their American-born children and grandchildren. The mosques these imams built—the Albanian Moslem Society established in Harper Woods in 1961 and the Islamic Center of America established in greater Detroit in 1963—exemplified this pattern, with large social halls in addition to prayer spaces, classrooms for Sunday school programs, and an active commitment to educating non-Muslims about Islam.

Imams Chirri and Isma'il were also active in the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (FIA), a group, incorporated in 1954, that promoted the interests and coordinated the activities of many North American Muslim communities. Detroit Muslims were prominent in the leadership of the FIA, hosting several annual conventions; editing the federation's two

publications, the *Muslim Star* and the *FIA Journal*; and supervising effective mosque-building projects and community relations. The FIA strengthened Detroit mosques by supporting their capital campaigns, providing Sunday school curricular materials, establishing a national youth organization and summer camp, and encouraging cooperation across racial, ethnic, and sectarian lines.

#### AFTER 1965

When Congress passed the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, a new era of Muslim immigration and expansion began. Muslims who arrived in Detroit in the 1960s and 1970s, mostly from the Arab world and South Asia, found six active Muslim institutions in the area. New immigrants joined these institutions in growing numbers, greatly transforming how Islam was practiced in Detroit. In many cases, immigrants broke away from "Americanized" mosques or took control of them. They were surprised to find, in Detroit, congregations in which English prevailed over immigrant tongues, where wedding dances and other secular activities were held

in the social halls of the mosques, and where prayer rooms were closed on Fridays, the day of communal Muslim prayer, but were open on Sundays, to accommodate American work schedules. As their numbers grew, the immigrants created new mosques with stricter gender segregation, a clearer separation of sacred and secular activities, and regimes of worship and teaching that conformed more closely to the practices they had grown up with in their countries of origin.

Likewise, after the death of Elijah Muhammad in 1975, his son, W. D. MOHAMMED, brought the NOI into doctrinal alignment with Sunni Muslims, radically transforming the faith and practice of Islam among African Americans. In 1982, Muhammad's Temple No. 1, established in 1930, changed its name to Masjid Wali Muhammad. These demographic and doctrinal transformations greatly facilitated the interaction of Muslims across ethnic, racial, and sectarian lines, but most of Detroit's mosques continued to organize around the key social distinctions that had been important to earlier generations: national origin, race, and identification with Sunni or Shi'a traditions.

As more immigrants, converts, and indigenous Muslims made their homes in Detroit in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, it became difficult to provide an accurate count of Detroit's Muslims. One 2004 study sponsored by the Institute of Social Policy and Understanding estimated a population of between 125,000 and 200,000. More than half of those who attended Friday prayers, according to this study, were Arab (of Lebanese, Iraqi, Yemeni, Palestinian, and Egyptian origin), followed by South Asians (Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis), African Americans, Europeans (Albanians and Bosnians), and immigrants from Africa. Turks, Iranians, Hispanics, East Asians, and Euro-American converts were also present in Detroit mosques, but their numbers were relatively small.

The 2004 Detroit Arab American Study found that the majority (58 percent) of Detroit's Arab Americans were Christian rather than Muslim. According to U.S. Census data, the Arab population of greater Detroit jumped from roughly 127,000 in 2000 to 175,000 in 2005. This suggested that there were about 73,700 Muslim Arab Americans in the Detroit population.

Regardless of the precise number, by the 21st century, greater Detroit hosted every conceivable type of Muslim community found in America. The City of Detroit was home to the majority of the area's African-American mosques, which numbered well over a dozen and were differentiated along lines of belief, practice, and socioeconomic status. African-American mosques, such as the Muslim Center of Detroit, which was established in 1984, have traditionally welcomed immigrants from Nigeria, Senegal, and other African nations, but African immigrants have been increasingly likely to establish mosques of their own.

Recently arrived immigrants from Yemen, Iraq, and Bangladesh have been moving into economically marginal Detroit neighborhoods and building ethnic enclaves in which they have found security, if not prosperity. Highland Park, home to Detroit's first mosque, still had a visible Muslim presence by the 21st century, but its Muslims were black, not Lebanese. Hamtramck, once a Polish immigrant stronghold, became home to the area's largest Yemeni, Bangladeshi, and Bosnian neighborhoods. This city of 23,000 boasted at least seven thriving mosques and is likely to have a Muslim majority population if recent trends continue.

The suburb of Dearborn, however, was home to the largest and most visible Arab and Muslim enclave. By 2007, 35 percent of the city's 99,000 residents were Arab, and 95 percent of these were Muslim. Dearborn was also home to the area's oldest mosque, the American Moslem Society, and to its largest, the Islamic Center of America, in addition to 10 other mosques, the majority of which were frequented by Lebanese and Iraqi Shi'a.

Detroit's affluent northern suburbs also attracted South Asian and Arab professionals. South Asians established at least a dozen mosques, including the Sunni Islamic Association of Greater Detroit, established in 1978; the Muslim Community of the Western Suburbs, established in 1988; and the Shi'a Zainabia Center, established in 1998. South Asian mosques also included several special communities. Masjid al-Burhani in Farmington, established in 1988, was affiliated with the DAUDI BOHRAS, an Isma'ili Shi'a sect based in Mumbai, India. Masjid Mahmood in Rochester Hills, established in 2008, was the newest Ahmadiyyah center, opened by a community that can trace its presence in Detroit back to Sadiq's arrival in 1921.

Indians and Pakistanis were also visible, along with Arab Americans, in the most prominent of Detroit's multiethnic mosques, the Muslim Unity Center in Bloomfield Hills, established in 1993, and in several newer mosques built in suburbs without a historical Muslim presence, such as Southgate's Masjid Umar Bin Khattab, established in 1994, and Warren's Islamic Organization of North America, established in 2007.

Despite Islam's century-long presence in Detroit, the vast majority of adult Muslims in the city by the 21st century were first-generation immigrants (or first-generation converts to Islam). This factor has greatly influenced the development of local mosques, which have often doubled as ethnic community centers. Arabic has been taught alongside Bangla, Albanian, Wolof, Gujarati, English, and Urdu. New suburban mosques have been built with elaborate banquet facilities, sports complexes, and media centers. They have accommodated not only daily prayers and Friday sermons but also a busy schedule of weddings, youth activities, and programming designed to maintain cultural and personal links to immigrant homelands.

ISLAMIC SCHOOLS that provide Arabic instruction have also been thriving in greater Detroit, and many have been placed inside or adjacent to mosque facilities. Although some of Detroit's most prominent mosques were multimillion-dollar facilities that could hold thousands of worshippers, small neighborhood mosques and unassuming prayer spaces were also maintained by working-class Muslims, Sufi brotherhoods, or Muslim coworkers who needed a place to pray near work. In fact, most Detroit mosques in the first decade of the 21st century occupied buildings that were originally built for other purposes: commercial banks, factories, retail stores, warehouses, churches, "drive-thru" restaurants, and even bowling alleys.

The suburb of Dearborn, with its large, highly visible Arab-American neighborhoods, has often been described as the center of the Muslim community in Detroit. With the increasing immigration after 1965, halal, or permissible, foods were made easily available in the city's several Arab shopping districts, as were Islamic clothing, literature, and artwork. More than 65 percent of Dearborn Public School students were Muslim, and, consequently, public schools have been closed on Islamic holidays and halal foods were served in school cafeterias and area hospitals. Arabic has been offered alongside French and Spanish in classrooms, and the call to prayer has been broadcast daily from local mosques since 1983.

The steps mainstream institutions have taken to accommodate Dearborn's Muslims are gradually being replicated elsewhere in the Detroit area and nationwide. From day care centers to funeral homes, Muslim-owned and -oriented businesses have been flourishing in Detroit, and a wide array of English and foreign language media (radio, television, print, and Internet Web sites) have filled a vibrant Muslim public sphere. The *Muslim Observer*, for example, a weekly newspaper with a national circulation, was founded in Farmington in 1998. The COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS has also maintained an active and highly visible chapter in Detroit, and the area has been home to several intrafaith associations that seek to defuse sectarian disputes, such as the Muslim Shura Council and the Council of Islamic Organizations of Michigan. Detroit's Muslims have been active in interfaith, ecumenical organizations as well, including the Michigan Roundtable and the Children of Abraham.

Finally, Detroit's blend of immigrant and American-born Muslims has contributed to the success of Muslims in local politics. James Karoub, the son of Imam Hussein Karoub, became the first Muslim elected to statewide office in the 1960s, when he served three terms in the Michigan State Legislature. Adam Shakoor, a member of the Nation of Islam in the 1970s, became the Muslim community's first district court judge in the 1980s. He also served as deputy mayor and as chief administrator of Detroit in the 1990s. Michael Berry

served as a Wayne County commissioner from 1967 to 1982. Suzanne Sareini has likewise served on the Dearborn City Council since the early 1980s. While all of these Muslims were born in the United States, their groundbreaking public service has made it possible for immigrant Muslims to attain elected or appointed offices in greater Detroit. By the 21st century, there were more than a dozen Muslim public officials serving in the city and its suburbs.

### POST-9/11 BACKLASH

The size, visibility, and diversity of Detroit's Muslim communities made them vulnerable to the backlash that followed the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. Several prominent mosques received bomb threats (most originating from outside Michigan), Islamic schools shut down for several days, and the sense of mourning and fear was palpable. Public officials in Michigan were quick, however, to join Arab and Muslim organizations in protecting Muslim neighborhoods and institutions.

Dearborn, despite its large Arab population, suffered only two reported hate crimes in the year following the 9/11 attacks, and the percentage of Arabs and Muslims who personally suffered from the backlash in Detroit was significantly lower than national averages. Nonetheless, the U.S. government has singled out Detroit for special scrutiny in the "War on Terror." More than 1,000 Michigan residents have been questioned by federal officers in recent years, and the FBI's field office in Detroit has tripled in size since 2001. For all this unprecedented attention, and despite several high-profile federal trials, no links have been established between any Muslim American in Detroit and al-Qaeda or the 9/11 conspirators.

Among the most fascinating developments of the post-9/11 era has been the dramatic upsurge in political, economic, and cultural influence experienced by Detroit's Muslim communities. Dozens of new mosques have been built since 2001, and old ones have been renovated and enlarged. Muslims have been elected and appointed to public office throughout greater Detroit. Ethnic museums, festivals, and cultural events have been flourishing among the Arab Muslim community.

The city's Muslim population has been growing, even as the city generally and the state of Michigan as a whole steadily lose population. During a period of intense Islamophobia, U.S. wars in Arab and Muslim countries, and a domestic antiterror campaign that targets Muslims and people of Middle Eastern descent, the Muslims of greater Detroit have fared remarkably well. Stigma and discrimination persisted, but the Muslims of Detroit created new models of American citizenship that drew successfully on the lessons they learned during a century of political and cultural adaptation.

*Sally Howell and Andrew F. Shryock*



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**dhikr**

*Dhikr* are the meditative rituals practiced by many Muslims, primarily Sufis, in the remembrance of God. As a whole, Sufi practitioners, both men and women, engage in multiple forms of *dhikr*, but as members of a particular Sufi order, individuals often value one particular form of the ritual over others. Many *dhikr* rituals are practiced in groups, while others are reserved for private practice. No matter what its form, *dhikr* is generally used to break from the ordinary world and enter a more connected, direct experience with God.

Most forms of *dhikr* involve prayer expressed both internally and externally. The MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER practices *SEMA*, a rotating dance in which the practitioner connects to God physically and spiritually. Many Americans were introduced to *sema* by a troupe of traveling performers sponsored by the Turkish Ministry of Culture in the 1950s. Since the 1970s, the Mevlevi Order of America has also taught classes

and held events related to *sema* in the United States under the instruction of a sheikh, or master, from Konya, Turkey, the homeland of the practice.

The CHISHTI SUFI ORDER, most popular in South Asia, practices a form of *dhikr* called *qawwali*. A group of musicians sings religious songs set to the beat of fast, rhythmic music, often employing instruments historically significant to the region in which they are practicing, such as the North Indian *dholak* tall drum, *sitar* guitar, and *table* two-drum set. Many Americans were introduced to *qawwali* through tours by the Asia Society, who brought Pakistani Sufis to perform in concert halls in 1975 and 1978. The second of these played to a sold-out Carnegie Hall in NEW YORK CITY.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, a famous Pakistani *qawwal*, or *qawwali* leader, found commercial success in the United States through his business relationship with British rock star Peter Gabriel, who produced "world music" albums featuring Khan and others in the 1980s. Khan contributed to movie soundtracks, including Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988) and *Dead Man Walking* (1995) in collaboration with grunge rocker Eddie Vedder. Khan's fame also grew through live shows as an established artist in the United States. He was most known, however, for his use of electronic synthesizers and modern instruments on his albums. While in live concert, however, Khan employed only nonelectric instruments.

The NAQSHBANDI SUFI ORDER, founded in modern-day Uzbekistan, stresses the importance of breathing in its *dhikr* rituals. Some of its meditative breathing exercises involve praying to the rhythm of one's breathing by speaking prayers as one inhales and exhales. Most Naqshbandi forms of *dhikr* involve little vocalization, though the precise forms differ among the many branches of the Naqshbandi order. The Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order of America, for example, has engaged in a form of *dhikr* meant to remove the "70,000 veils," or distractions, that separate humans from the presence of God. Under the guidance of a master, the veils would be lifted until the practitioner was presented directly with God. This form of *dhikr*, like many, was practiced under a sheikh, or master, who revealed the form to the disciple through time and training.

While many Sufi groups respect the authority of one another, some forms of *dhikr* take precedence over others. The Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order of America has claimed that their form of *dhikr* was the fastest and only sure way to reach a direct connection with God. As other forms of *dhikr* present a picture of heaven as the practitioner arises through the veils, one could become contented without reaching the full splendor of God. As such, the practitioner would be presented to God only through a sudden, clear vision.

The use of *misbaha* (*dhikr* beads) has been common among many Sufi groups and non-Sufi Muslims alike. The *misbaha* contains 99 beads, each representing a different name of God. The practitioner marks each name by passing a finger

over the bead and reciting the name until completion. The *misbaha* became a source of controversy in New York State in the 1990s when prison inmates challenged a ban on their using the beads as a violation of the First Amendment right to religious freedom. A state court backed the inmates' rights in 1995 to use *dhikr* beads. Some Sunni Muslims reject the use of dance, music, and poetry in the performance of *dhikr* as entertainment rather than prayer. Instead, they perform a *dhikr* of words. According to the As-Sunnah Foundation of America, "Dhikr can take place with the tongue, for which the one who utters it receives reward, and it is not necessary for this that he understand or recall its meaning." The organization has stressed that having *dhikr* in one's heart and knowing what one is saying creates further closeness to God. This *dhikr*, or the remembrance of God, is mandated in the QUR'AN, which depicts human beings as naturally forgetful.

The remembrance of God and the break in one's day for divine reflection as practiced through *dhikr* is a common and important feature for many Muslims. Forms of *dhikr* can be traced through history to the practices of the prophet MUHAMMAD or those close to him and represent for many American Muslims a personal connection to God that can be expressed through the body, mind, and spirit.

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## dietary laws

From the beginning of Muslim-American history in the colonial era, Muslim Americans have honored various dietary prescriptions. They have followed age-old Islamic prohibitions against the consumption of alcohol, pork, and improperly butchered meat. Some have observed additional dietary rules created by and explicitly for Muslim Americans. By the latter part of the 20th century, Muslim Americans had developed a nationwide dietary culture that was linked by a shared consumer market of Islamic goods and the new information technologies needed to buy and sell them. In doing so, they also attempted to find acceptance and respect from non-Muslim Americans for their dietary differences.

### SLAVERY ERA

There is not enough documentation to give a full-fledged historical account of the dietary practices of Muslim slaves in the Thirteen Colonies and the United States, though some

Muslim slaves clearly observed Islamic rules governing halal, or permissible, foods. In *Some Memoirs of the Life of Job* the biographer Thomas Bluett gave an account of his African noble friend, JOB BEN SOLOMON of Bundu, who was captured in 1732 and sold as a slave in the Americas. Bluett reports that Job impressed his acquaintances with his good nature, obvious spirituality, religious devotion, and adherence to Muslim dietary laws. Job neither ate pork nor drank liquor, and he preferred to slaughter his own meat. Similarly, the story of the "Maryland Muslim" YARROW MAMOUT (Mahmoud or Mohammad) evidences the observation of dietary laws among slaves. Mamout was brought to the Americas in the 1720s and spent years in servitude in Maryland until he was freed in 1796. Immortalized in a portrait by the artist Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827), who made two paintings of him, Yarrow was reported to have abstained from eating pork and drinking whiskey. BILALI OF SAPELO ISLAND, Georgia (?–1859) taught his children not to eat "wild" animals in observance of the Islamic ban on carrion and said that seafood such as crab was to be avoided, perhaps following of the schools of SHARI'A, or Islamic "law," that banned such crustaceans.

### TWENTIETH-CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS

Like many other African-American religious groups, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS have tended to see food and dietary reform as central to their religious practices. Purifying and strengthening the black body was key to "liberating the race," it was thought. Members of the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, a Muslim organization founded in CHICAGO in 1925, were reported to have followed a strict vegetarian diet. Fish was permitted but no meat or eggs were to be eaten. Smoking and drinking liquor were forbidden. Various herbal remedies were used to heal the body of both spiritual and physical illnesses.

Strict dietary guidelines also characterized daily life inside the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), another Muslim group, founded in the 1930s. NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD published an 18-page list of permitted and prohibited foods in Chicago around 1950. The NOI believers were instructed to eat once a day and abstain from pork, alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, chitterlings, and other types of soul food, which were associated with a slave diet. In his two-volume *How to Eat to Live* (1968 and 1972), Muhammad claimed that pork was a cause of mental and physical illness and represented enslavement, ignorance, subjugation, impoverishment, and shame. Muhammad indicted the slave masters for offering to their slaves the rotten and worst types of foods that would include "the flesh of that poisonous animal, the swine."

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Elijah Muhammad encouraged his followers to establish businesses that would



Muslims and non-Muslims line up to purchase halal, or religiously permissible, hot dogs (without pork) from one of New York City's many street vendors. (*newscom*)

provide health food and employment opportunities for the believers. Muhammad himself owned several farms in Georgia, Michigan, and Alabama, and their produce and meat were sold at a national network of NOI markets. Thousands of African Americans, non-Muslims and Muslims, consumed the whiting fish that the NOI imported from Peru in the 1970s. For NOI members, eating the fish was practically a religious duty. The University of Islam, the movement's parochial school in DETROIT and Chicago, also included dietary education in its curriculum. Dietary laws for Elijah Muhammad were an indispensable component of his reform plan.

#### MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS

After the Civil War ended in 1865, Muslim immigrants gradually started to land on the shores of the United States. While the dietary habits of early immigrants are not extensively documented, available evidence indicates that first-generation Muslim individuals observed the dawn-to-sundown fast during Ramadan, refrained from alcohol and pork, slaughtered their meat according to Islamic traditional rules, and prayed five times a day.

Some later Arab immigrants found the practices of ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS too lax. In writing about his journey to the United States as a visiting professor during 1957–58, the Egyptian professor Mahmoud al-Shawarbi recounted the keen interest of the Brooklyn Muslim community in making available Arab bread and sweets, without showing any concern for the lack of a single Islamic butcher shop. Al-Shawarbi raised the issue within the community, and eventually the Halal Meat Shop was opened. Al-Shawarbi hoped that other Muslim communities would soon follow suit.

#### A NATIONAL DIETARY CULTURE

In the wake of religious REVIVALISM of the 1970s, following religious dietary laws became a larger and more public priority for both Muslim immigrants from Asia, Europe, and Africa and indigenous African-American Muslims. Some Muslims self-consciously shifted from observing an Islamic diet to actively seeking halal food, reflecting a change in the Muslim-American understanding of the Islamic dietary laws. This new regime not only emphasized the observation of Islamic dietary guidelines in the home and in neighborhood



markets; it called also for closely examining foods purchased in the supermarket, looking for prohibited ingredients such as lard or millet in cheese and pastries.

A national consumer market for halal products soon developed. Some individuals limited their purchases to kosher products, although activists argued over whether kosher and halal were the same thing. Muslim businesses bought slaughterhouses, and some slaughterhouses owned by non-Muslims hired Muslims who could slaughter animals according to the Islamic diet regulations. Some Muslim individuals made special arrangements with slaughterhouses, allowing them to perform the act of slaughtering and leave the processing to the slaughterhouse. Questions arose over the legitimacy of these policies, prompting publication of various fatwas, articles, and monographs on Islamic dietary laws in the 1970s. Ahmed Sakr, a Muslim activist in the field of dietary laws, published a 1971 article entitled "Dietary Regulations and Food Habits of Muslims" in the *Journal of the American Dietary Association*. The Islamic view on alcoholism was published in a 1976 Malik Badri booklet, *Islam and Alcoholism*. In the early 1980s, Dr. Ahmed Sakr and Muhammad Mazhar Hussaini established the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America in Bedford, Illinois. The goal of this council was to educate Muslims about the legality and procedure of the slaughtering process in North America. They established a newsletter, "The Islamic Perspective," and printed a textbook entitled *Islamic Dietary Laws and Practices* in 1984. The council also conducted seminars and workshops with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and some Christian and Jewish groups, with a view to increase the awareness of the needs for more halal food resources in America. The council also issued certificates for halal meat and halal ingredients.

To check the permissibility of a certain food, many Muslims sent inquiries to different food production companies about the ingredients of their products. Some companies, such as Midamar Corporation in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, responded by giving assurance to its customers that its products met their requirements. A McDonald's restaurant in Dearborn, Michigan, home to a large Muslim-American community, introduced hamburgers that passed the tests set by Islamic dietary laws. With more Muslims joining the UNITED STATES MILITARY, Captain Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad, the first commissioned Muslim chaplain in the U.S. Army, developed the "ready-to-eat" meal project in 1993. The meal consisted of halal meat and other items appropriate to an Islamic diet.

The growing demand for halal products led to wide-scale production of halal-based foods, and some Islamic organizations and centers established offices for halal certification purposes. At a 2003 conference, Dr. Muhammad M. Chaudry, the president of the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America, stated that more than 80 halal certify-

ing organizations existed in the United States. They included the Islamic Society of North American Halal Certification Program and the USA Halal Chamber of Commerce. The disagreements among religious scholars about slaughtering techniques and animal-based chemical derivatives and the absence of a central certification authority or set of standards created confusion among many Muslim Americans as to what was or was not permissible. Some companies took advantage of this confusion by falsely labeling their products as halal. The disclosure of such misdemeanors compelled some states, including California, Illinois, Michigan, Texas, and New Jersey, to pass halal-labeling legislation between 2000 and 2004.

In the latter part of the 20th century, the observance of dietary laws among Muslim Americans varied according to understandings of and attitudes toward the rules governing food preparation and consumption. Some Muslims insisted on buying only certified halal products, while others contented themselves with avoiding pork and alcohol. Others avoided red meat but would consume poultry, even if it were not slaughtered according to Islamic regulations. These poultry consumers mentioned the name of Allah before beginning to eat in accordance with the idea that the name of God must be invoked before slaughtering an animal. Some Muslim Americans may avoid pork but still drink alcohol. Another group purchases all kinds of meats with the exception of pork and its related products. As for dietary laws concerning alcohol and other intoxicating drinks, many Muslims, especially younger ones, do not strictly follow the rules. According to a 1987 survey by Yvonne Haddad and Adair Lummis, almost one-third of immigrant Muslims and half of American-born Muslims consumed alcohol in the six-month period preceding the survey publication in 1987.

The concern over Islamic dietary laws within the ranks of the growing Muslim-American community reflects larger concerns of Muslims in America about their social status in the United States. Consideration for the dietary norms of religious minorities—whether for Jews, Mormons, or other religious groups—has long been a gesture of respect. In the last several decades, Muslim Americans, too, have sought acceptance of their dietary differences from the broader American culture because of their overwhelming desire to be embraced as full American citizens.

Said Abdelrahman

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### Asma Gull Hasan

#### “My Experiences with Pork Products” (2000)

*The author of three books, Asma Gull Hasan (1974– ) is the American daughter of a Pakistani neurologist and businessman. Though born in Chicago, Hasan was raised in Pueblo, Colorado, where, she has said, she became a “Muslim feminist cowgirl.” Educated in some of America’s most elite schools, including Groton, Wellesley College, and New York University, Hasan wrote the following comments, taken from her book American Muslims (2000), while still in her 20s. Since that time, she has also authored Why I Am a Muslim (2004) and Red, White, and Muslim: My Story of Belief (2009), in addition to blogging for Glamour magazine and touring Muslim nations on behalf of the U.S. Department of State. Hasan’s humorous anecdotes about pork illustrate how observing Islamic dietary rules can become an important way for Muslim Americans to preserve religious and cultural identity and how the accommodation of such rules by non-Muslims acts as a gauge of social acceptance.*



I could tell my life story based on my experiences with pork products. As a Muslim, I do not eat pork. In fact, the Qur’an lists guidelines, described by the term *halal*. These prescriptions are slightly less strict than and quite similar to the ones set down in the Torah, and the terms *halal* and *kosher*

are practically interchangeable. The only part of the *halal* diet that I actually follow is the restriction on eating pork or any by-products produced from a pig. I don’t think I’ll be condemned on Judgment Day for not following the complete *halal* diet. I could be wrong about that, but, to me, there are other things that are more central to my identity as a Muslim, specifically contributing time and money to charitable causes and fasting during Ramadan.

When you live in a country where the majority of people eat pork freely, the Islamic restriction on pork ends up being really important. Anyone I have ever dined out with knows that I don’t eat pork, and that’s a lot of people! . . . These same people probably *don’t know* that I fast during Ramadan or that I’m supposed to pray five times a day. What they know about Muslims through me is that we don’t eat pork.

My parents taught me to follow this restriction on pork. To emphasize the point to my young brother, my mother told us that “pig” was a bad word, and we couldn’t say it. As a result, we largely ignored Miss Piggy, focusing on other Muppets, and often spelled “pig” when we needed to use that word, saying, “Mom is there p-i-g in this?” My brother was too young to know how to spell correctly and created his own innovation by saying, “I saw g-r-p’s at the zoo!” We thought my brother’s attempt at spelling pig was so funny that we adopted it and soon after were saying at restaurants, “We can’t eat any g-r-p’s” and, upon seeing our waiter’s quizzical look added, “I mean, pork.”

My parents continue to emphasize this restriction in all ways possible. One day I called home from boarding school to tell my mother I had a crush on a boy in my class. “Is he Christian?” my mom asked. “I guess,” I responded, thinking that was far less important than that this boy and I were going to live happily ever after once he realized I existed. “Well,” my mom stated in that motherly, matter of fact tone of her, “I wouldn’t want to kiss someone who’s eaten pork! YUCK!” Clearly my mother’s disapproval ended the relationship before it began. Other girls date boys who ride motorcycles to scare their mothers; I just have to date a boy who eats pork!

In the past few years, pork has enjoyed a revival in the culinary world, and I often find myself skipping over menu items that end with “wrapped in pork.” I’ve also been dining out with friends a lot more in recent years. As a result, my dinner or

lunch companion is treated to an unsolicited lesson on *halal* eating! Sometimes I ask the waiter if the item can be prepared without pork, and sometimes I just don't feel like going to the trouble and order another dish.

Not to be self-piteous, but I have to say that we Muslims and Jews who don't eat pork, and vegetarians, have it tough on this one. I'm assuming here that you, the reader, do not have religious conflicts with eating certain foods, are not a vegetarian, and do not have allergies to particular foods. Now imagine going to a restaurant and scanning the menu and not saying, "What am I in the mood for tonight?" You look at the menu and say, "What can I eat here?" Sometimes the choices are few . . . [though] most of the time, it's not a problem. But I can honestly say that I've never had the luxury of ordering anything off the menu casually—I've always *analyzed* menus.

To tell you the truth, I didn't know I had it "worse off" until it was pointed out to me by a non-Muslim. The summer after my first year in college, I worked as an intern for U.S. West in Denver in the public relations department. I loved my job because my boss, a woman named Lisa Best, is a great person. . . .

One day, Ms. Best took our gang to lunch across the street at Le Peep, a restaurant that serves breakfast food all day. In those days, I didn't care about my weight and was really looking forward to a short stack of buttermilk pancakes with butter smeared all over them and moist brown syrup flowing down the sides like Niagara Falls. My family and I had eaten at Le Peep often so I wasn't worried about eating pork by mistake so long as I let our server know I didn't eat pork.

Once we ordered, I noticed that several others in our group were ordering pancakes with a side of bacon. So I specifically pointed out in my order that I absolutely could not have bacon anywhere in my order, just pancakes. The waitress seemed not to understand what I was saying, and Ms. Best emphasized the point. A few minutes later, the waitress brought out an order of pancakes with long brown and red strips of bacon, oozing grease and juice, lying at the pancakes' side, and placed it in front of me.

Similar incidents had happened to me before, and they are always awkward. I always wonder, as I see my server heading for me with a dish that has bacon in it, should I say something before he or she puts the plate down, or would that be rude?

Usually I wait till they put the plate down, as I did at Le Peep, and I check the food to make sure I'm not seeing things. In the case of the pancakes, though they looked innocent enough themselves, that was definitely bacon there, at the stack's side.

"Oh, you know, I can't eat these," I said nicely. As I had learned, it was best to act surprised and sweet rather than shocked and disgusted. "I can't eat pork." Then recalling an associate who did order bacon on the side, I asked the server if she wanted to give this order to her.

"Well, hers is already being prepared. Why don't I just take the bacon off this one?" The waitress's hands moved towards my plate. "Well, you see, I can't eat these pancakes because the juices of the pancakes and bacon have already mixed, and I can't eat anything that's touched the bacon." The waitress held the plate in her hand now. I offered, "Why don't you just leave this plate here, and I'll just order another stack of pancakes?" That way I would know I was getting a new set of pancakes and not the same set with the bacon removed.

And then an argument ensued. The waitress defiantly shifted the plate of the illicit pancakes and bacon to her palm and moved it closer to her head: "I don't see why you can't eat it. It's all cooked on the same griddle!" I was speechless for a moment with this point. It is true that cooks can do whatever they want in the restaurant kitchen. For all I know they're washing their hands with lard. I replied, with enough meekness to keep a fight from breaking out, "I know that, but I'd just prefer to eat fresh pancakes."

Throughout this meal, I could feel Ms. Best's body temperature rise as she became more annoyed. No one appreciated the waitress's attitude, but I was used to it. This had happened to me before, and I was prepared to deal with it.

But Ms. Best was horrified that my original instructions had been ignored and she had tried to say something before, but I had managed to hold my own. My co-workers sat quietly with their eyes peeled on me and the waitress, as if we were a soap opera. The waitress started to say something, and Ms. Best burst out, "Just leave that plate here with me, and go to the kitchen and get *plain* pancakes!" The waitress started up again but before she could get past, "But—," Ms. Best ordered, "Just do it! Now!"

A silence came over the table. I don't think any of us had seen Ms. Best that angry before. I

remembered my manners and said, “Thank you.” I was surprised at how dramatic the event had become. Ms. Best replied by saying how ridiculous it was that the waitress didn’t understand my initial request, that my needs as a customer were ignored, and that the waitress must have a problem with people who follow dietary restrictions or have a hearing problem or something. As the rest of the group envisioned the waitress’s tip diminishing, I suddenly realized what I had been taking for granted: I had always accepted being mistreated at restaurants because of my special request of no bacon. It took Ms. Best, a non-Muslim, to make me realize that I deserved to have my religious beliefs respected.

Ms. Best calmed down, after complaining that we shouldn’t be charged for my dish due to the server’s mishandling, and we all ate well. But after that lunch, I knew that I would never order at restaurants apologetically again. I am a Muslim after all, and there is nothing wrong with my requesting no pork. That’s what being an American is all about—being able to say, I don’t want to do this because it compromises my religious beliefs. Who would have thought empowerment could come from ordering lunch at a breakfast-theme restaurant?

I admit that, in today’s world, especially in first-world countries, there is no good reason *not* to eat pork. According to historical sources, Muhammad instructed his followers not to eat pork because pork was often cooked improperly, and many died from consequent bacterial complications. Today, we rarely encounter that problem, but practically all Muslims continue to follow the restriction on pork. When I tell my server at a restaurant that I can’t eat pork, I’m sometimes tempted to say I’m allergic to it, and sometimes I do. Servers instantly understand and become vigilant. It’s unfortunate that we can’t understand religious beliefs in the same way. While there is no scientific reason not to eat pork, other than to cut down on fatty foods and calories, observing the restriction keeps me close to the Prophet Muhammad and reminds me that I am a Muslim. It is a tradition that ties me to the Muslims of the world and the Muslims of past history.



Source: Asma Gull Hasan. *American Muslims: The New Generation*. New York: Continuum, 2000, pp. 169–174.

## discrimination

A 2009 Gallup poll found that on the whole, Muslim Americans are “thriving, but not content.” While there were many possible explanations for that lack of contentment, discrimination, or the threat of it, was certainly one source of this Muslim-American ambivalence. Since the colonial era, Muslims have faced a number of forms of discrimination based on their religion, race, national origins, class, gender, sexual orientation, and other factors. For most of U.S. history, however, the issue of religious discrimination has been less central than race or national origins—issues that literally defined whether you were slave or free before 1865, or permitted to enter the country between 1882 and 1965. In the late 20th century, with the end of the cold war and the increased UNITED STATES MILITARY involvement in the Middle East, that situation changed. Discrimination against Muslim Americans on the basis of religion often came to the fore and sometimes determined whether one would be hired or fired from a job, targeted for surveillance or held in detention, and even attacked while shopping or walking down the street.

While the history of anti-Muslim stereotypes has played a central role in UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS and to a lesser degree domestic life since the beginning of the republic, much of the discrimination faced by Muslim Americans in the 19th and 20th centuries was on account of their race or national origins. Thousands of Muslim slaves arrived in North America from the colonial era until 1808, the year the United States outlawed the international slave trade. These AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES, like other slaves, were considered by the U.S. government to be chattel, pieces of property. As Chief Justice Roger B. Taney stated in the Supreme Court decision *Dred Scott v. Sanford* in 1857, they possessed “no rights which the white man was bound to respect.” Because some African-American Muslim slaves were highly educated, however, they were among the very few African slaves able to return home, often as a result of their abilities to convince their owners or others that they were not black Africans, but Moors—North African Muslims.

For Asian, African, and European Muslims in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a primary source of discrimination was immigration LAW. During this era, non-Anglo immigrants, including whites from southern and eastern Europe, found it increasingly harder to gain admission to the country. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act banned Chinese laborers (including Muslims, although the law did not mention religion) from immigrating or obtaining citizenship. This exclusionary act was later followed in 1917 by restrictions against all other Asian peoples from Arabia to Indonesia. Then, in 1924, the National Origins Act dramatically reduced the number of all other immigrants, with the exception of those from “Nordic,” or northwestern European, countries.



After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Muslim Americans experienced increased discrimination, including attacks and vandalism directed toward mosques, such as the Islamic Center of America, a Shi'a mosque in Dearborn, Michigan. (Getty Images North America)

Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 banned discrimination based on race and national origins, de facto discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities continued and remained a challenge. In addition, Muslim Americans, like non-Muslims, continued to struggle with discrimination based on class, gender, and sexual orientation, both inside and outside their communities. Increasingly in the late 20th century, however, Muslims also struggled with discrimination based on their religious identity.

The end of the cold war with the Soviet Union in the early 1990s led to increased U.S. involvement in the Middle East and other parts of the developing world where Muslims were a majority. U.S. entanglements in the Muslim world sometimes saw the U.S. government on the side of Muslims—as after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979—but more often than not, Muslim majorities disagreed with, opposed, and occasionally violently resisted U.S. foreign policy in the Muslim world. It was what international studies scholar Fawaz Gerges called a “clash of interests.”

This clash of interests abroad directly fueled discrimination against Muslims at home, as shown by the increase in hate crimes against Muslim Americans after high-profile incidents abroad. The Iranian revolution in 1979, the bomb-

ing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, and the Gulf War in 1991 all led to a spike in both stereotypes against Muslims as well as attacks on their property and their person. Domestic terrorism also contributed to this trend. The WORLD TRADE CENTER BOMBING OF 1993 and the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995 both led to anti-Muslim hate crimes (even though the bombing in Oklahoma City was the work of non-Muslims).

The COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR), founded in 1994 to combat stereotypes and defend Muslim interests, reported that discrimination increased after the Oklahoma City bombing, but the study also pointed to a paradox: While discrimination increased, so did opportunities for positive interactions among Muslims and non-Muslims. Increased exposure in the mainstream media and popular culture, in other words, was double-edged, leading to more discrimination *and* more sympathy for and solidarity with Muslim Americans. This was also the case after the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. According to the FBI, hate crimes against Muslims and Arabs rose 1,700 percent, but on the one-year anniversary of 9/11, more than 100 interfaith events were organized around the country that sought to create dialogue and peace.





Imam Omar Shahin (*left*) was one of the six Muslim imams, or religious leaders, removed from a US Airways flight in 2006. Preparing for a news conference in Washington, D.C., Shahin walks with supporters Rev. Walter Fauntroy (*second from left*), former District of Columbia delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives; Imam Mahdi Bray (*third from the left*), executive director of the Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation; and Rabbi Arthur Waskow (*right*) of the Shalom Center of Philadelphia. (Jonathan Ernst/Reuters/Landov)

Increasing suspicion of Arab and Muslim Americans in the wake of 9/11 and the war on terrorism led to further discrimination. According to a 2003 report by the AMERICAN-ARAB ANTI-DISCRIMINATION COMMITTEE (ADC), more than 80 cases of illegal and discriminatory removals of passengers after boarding a plane but before takeoff were reported. There were also more than 800 reports of employer discrimination, as well as reports of refusal of services, discriminatory service, and housing discrimination. Discriminatory immigration policies such as secret detentions, hearings and deportations, alien registration based on ethnicity, “voluntary interviews” with young Arab men, the monitoring of international students, and selective deportation also made Muslim Americans feel as if they were being unfairly targeted. In response, groups such as CAIR, ADC, and others

sought allies such as the American Civil Liberties Union in opposing these policies. In addition, Muslim Americans became even more active in U.S. electoral politics, attempting to support candidates who opposed what they considered to be discrimination.

In the first decade of the 21st century, it was clear to many Muslim-American leaders that discrimination against Muslim Americans would be an ongoing concern. A 2003 report issued by CAIR noted that harassment, violence, and discriminatory treatment against Muslims had increased by 70 percent from 2002. Muslim civil rights cases in 2004 were higher than ever. Although passenger profiling and unreasonable arrest along with search and seizure had dropped over the first year after 9/11, incidents of hate crimes had more than doubled. CAIR attributed this steep rise to

lingering fear after 9/11, the war in Iraq, pro-war public rhetoric, an increase in anti-Muslim rhetoric, public criticism of Islam as a faulty religion, and the implementation of the USA PATRIOT Act.

If there was a bright spot in the steep rise in discrimination suffered by Muslim Americans after 9/11, a 2009 Gallup poll and other research indicated that Muslims were thriving in spite of such discrimination and that they were determined to fight anti-Muslim stereotypes through peaceful political and social activism.

Maria F. Curtis

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### divorce

Muslim-American divorce has probably existed in the United States since the colonial era when Muslim Americans began to marry one another. Since AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES, like other slaves, often struggled to obtain official recognition of their marriages by states or church officials, Muslim slaves and their descendents most likely did not need legal divorce. They would have practiced divorce informally in case of marital discord, or in an even more likely scenario, couples would have been involuntarily separated through sale to other slave owners. Despite the struggle of slave families to stay together, many men and women were forced to move far away from their spouses. In many instances, they partnered with new people without any formal divorce from their old partners.

Little is known about the early history of divorce among ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, and other immigrant groups, though it is likely that divorce rates were fairly low until the dramatic rise in divorce for the U.S. population as a whole in the latter 20th century. Although the divorce rate among Muslim Americans has not been calculated by any government agency, some studies have estimated that 31 percent of North American Muslim marriages end in divorce, not much lower than the overall rate. It has also been estimated that the divorce rate among Muslim Americans has been increasing.

The reasons for divorce among Muslim-American couples have been diverse and include incompatibility, spousal

control and abuse, infidelity, extended family interference, and other forms of irreconcilable differences. Muslim Americans, in other words, have sought divorce for the same reasons that non-Muslim Americans have. Much of the past research done on Muslim-American divorce has focused on the legality of divorce in SHARI'A, or Islamic "law," though more recently scholars and writers have explored the social dimensions of divorce that affect the everyday lives of women and families. This is a significant shift because it provides a holistic picture of divorce experiences, especially those of women.

### SOCIAL AND FAMILIAL TIES

Divorce usually has strong emotional ramifications on communities and existing family structures. Some recent fieldwork studies, memoirs, and even works of fiction have added a more nuanced view of divorce experiences in many Muslim-American communities in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. These include Barbara C. Aswad and Barbara Bilg 's edited volume *Family and Gender among American Muslims: Issues Facing Middle Eastern Immigrants and Their Descendants* (1996); Carolyn Rouse's ethnography of African-American Muslim women, *Engaged Surrender: African American Women and Islam* (2004); and Mohja Kahf's novel *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* (2006). Manal Omar's personal account of her divorce in *Living Islam Out Loud* (2005) recalls the stigmas she faced in the Muslim community as a divorced woman.

These works have shown that divorce has been a highly stigmatized or shameful event in the Muslim-American community. However, because divorce has become more prevalent than before, the reactions of family and friends over a couple's divorce have gradually changed. Historically, many immigrant Muslim communities, parents, or extended family arranged marriages, facilitated, or had an active role in selecting the spouses for their children. The decision to divorce often caused the initiating spouses to incur disapproval and rejection from their families or communities. Personal accounts of divorced women have shown that regardless of the reasons for divorce, if a couple had children, then family and friends from the social network of the divorcing couple or friends from their mosque community attempted to reconcile them until the last moment before divorce decrees were issued. A wife who initiated divorce may have been viewed as intolerant or having little patience for her husband's abuses, especially if he was religiously devout.

However, it has also become more common for families and social networks to be sources of great support for women who initiate divorce, particularly those who experienced abuse during marriage. Networks of families that experienced the divorce of some female family member have sometimes come together in solidarity to share legal advice and stories about the abusiveness or incompatibility of husbands, especially those husbands that are recent immigrants and may

not be familiar with the American culture of divorce. Because divorce has a higher prevalence and historical precedent in African-American communities, the institution has been more socially acceptable in African-American Muslim communities than in many immigrant Muslim communities.

### CIVIL LAW VERSUS RELIGIOUS LAW

As is common with marriages in other religious communities in the United States, Muslim-American marriages have often been comprised of distinct legal components, both civil and religious. Muslim couples have usually considered civil marriage as a separate entity from the *nikah*, a Muslim marriage contract, or religious marriage. Similarly, they have conceived of divorce as a dual process, civil and religious. Indeed, many couples have treated the two processes as separate and have sought divorces through two avenues, although they may have chosen one system or a combination of civil and religious law to determine the divorce terms. In the absence of Islamic legal courts in the United States, some imams and MOSQUES have offered informal Islamic divorce arbitration.

Other Muslims have considered a U.S. divorce decree the same as an Islamic one, given that it is the law of the land in which they live, or have believed that a religious divorce is not necessary given that the religious marriage in the first place was a formality. For those who have chosen to draw upon any Islamic laws in their divorces, factors that have driven this decision may have been personal religiosity, the type of Muslim community to which couples belonged, the established divorce norms in that community, or their sense of one system, civil or Islamic, offering women more rights or protection.

### MUSLIM DIVORCES IN U.S. COURTS

Although a great number of Muslim divorces have taken place without contention or legal complications involving Islamic law in recent history, U.S. courts have had to deal with Islamic legal claims made in divorce cases. Usually, judges have supported the use of religious law if it increases the likelihood of conflict resolution and settlement of cases out of court. There has been limited success in enforcing terms of the Muslim marriage contract. In *Aziz v. Aziz*, a case heard by the New York Supreme Court in 1985, the payment of the *mahr*, the marriage dower paid by the husband to the wife, was enforced by the court. But in *Dajani v. Dajani*, a case heard in the California Court of Appeals in 1988, the *mahr* was not enforced.

Though courts favor the use of traditional arbitration methods, it has been common for husbands and wives to disagree on whether to use Islamic legal injunctions in their civil divorces. Although there may be religious impulses behind the use of Islamic law for determining divorce terms, it has



been easily manipulated to bring about a desired outcome on one side or the other. Attorneys have generally attempted to introduce Islamic law when they believe it will favor their clients' cases. For Muslim-American litigants, the definitions and sources of Islamic law have varied: They could be laws extracted from verses of the Qur'an, injunctions from hadith (the sayings or rulings by the prophet Mohammed) or *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), and even legislation from their countries of origin. Often, expert witnesses, who may or may not be qualified, have provided the court with conflicting, incomplete, or inaccurate information about Islamic law.

The most common issues related to Islamic law that have emerged in Muslim divorce cases have been securing an Islamic divorce for the wife, division of marital assets, payment or return of the *mahr*, and custody of children. According to many interpretations of Islamic law, husbands may divorce wives at any time through pronouncing *talaq*, which is a unilateral, husband-initiated divorce.

Traditionally speaking, women have access to divorce as well, although it is more limited. A woman may declare *khul'*, wife-initiated divorce, usually with the payment of the *mahr* or other compensation, but most Islamic legal scholars agree that the consent of the husband is required, creating unequal access to divorce. Finally, *faskh* or *tatliq* are judicial divorces that are also wife-initiated. A woman may take her case to a *qadi*, a judge in a court of Islamic law, and prove her grounds for divorce, such as the husband's impotence, unbearable cruelty, poor mental health, unreligious behavior, and in some cases abandonment. In the United States, husbands have no control over whether their wives divorce them in a civil court, so they have sometimes withheld their consent to a religious divorce if they do not want to divorce or disagree with the terms of the civil divorce.

Islamic law concerning divorce has also continued to change. The definitions of divorce in Islamic law, as well as child custody laws favoring the father, have been highly contested issues. Many contemporary Muslim scholars and feminists in the United States and worldwide have interpreted Islamic law more broadly to exclude the need for the husband's consent and have expanded custody rights and financial settlements for women. Muslim women concerned with both adherence to religious ritual practice and gender egalitarian rights have welcomed these interpretations during their divorces.

#### DIVISION OF FINANCES, MAHR, AND CHILD CUSTODY

Because there is no concept of marital wealth in Islamic law, women do not traditionally receive any alimony. A woman may keep gifts she received, any savings she accrued during the marriage from her earnings or stipend given by her husband, and in the case of *talaq*, when the man unilater-

ally divorces her, she may keep her *mahr*, or dower. Many Muslim-American FEMINISTS such as Aziza al-Hibri have championed court decisions that uphold the protection of a woman's right to keep her *mahr*. However, in a great number of court cases, such as *Shaban v. Shaban*, heard in the California Court of Appeals in 2001, husbands have made the claim that, according to Islamic law, they owe nothing more than the *mahr*, which is often a small token amount of money. In such cases, attorneys representing wives have countered with other Islamic legal claims that show how women are due compensation for maintaining the household and caring for children during the marriage.

Because most state laws governing the welfare of children are both stringent and less flexible, court records have shown that Islamic law has been invoked far less frequently in cases concerning child custody. Courts have often enforced the norm of joint legal custody that generally grants sole physical custody to the mother. Courts may award one parent sole physical and legal custody if there are extenuating circumstances such as abuse or lack of financial stability.

Though the introduction of arguments based on Islamic law are less frequent in custody matters than in the division of marital assets, some fathers have claimed that Islamic law grants them complete custody of children over the age of six. Some first-generation husbands have attempted to use this tradition as psychological leverage over their usually first-generation wives to deter divorce. Such threats have worked in some cases, as some women have stayed in difficult marriages for the sake of keeping families together.

#### THE FUTURE

Muslim-American community leaders such as Imam Talal Eid began in the late 1990s to propose the establishment of Islamic law tribunals that would provide participating Muslims with standardized Muslim marriage certificates and divorce decrees in the same style as the *Beit Dins* that serve Orthodox Jewish-American communities. The aim of this would be to use uniform Islamic law to govern family law issues. By the 21st century, some Muslim feminists expressed their opposition to such an establishment. They feared that Islamic law would not be interpreted in a gender-neutral fashion and that women would not be able to influence the legal process as full participants.

Zahra S. Ayubi

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## dress

There has been and is no single form or style of Muslim or Muslim-American dress. The clothes that Muslim Americans have worn reflect the ethnic, class, and personal style of the individuals who wear them. Those Muslim Americans who wish to adhere to the standards set forth in the SHARI'AH, or Islamic "law and ethics," generally stress the importance of dressing modestly. For some, Islam requires the covering of the *awrah*, or the private parts of the body not to be seen outside of the home or by anyone other than immediate family. This *awrah* requirement has often been understood to mean that a woman should cover her body and her hair and that a man cover himself from the navel to the knees, but even observant Muslim Americans have disagreed about the need to observe these rules and how to interpret them. Beyond the debates over the ethical implications of dress, the history

of Muslim-American style of dress shows the growing diversity of the community over the last several hundred years in addition to highlighting the emergence of a true Muslim-American consumer culture in the late 20th century.

## EARLY DRESS PATTERNS

"Muslim dress" in the early republic and antebellum eras of U.S. history became known to Americans first through the country's imaginative engagement with the Islamic world. Exotic paintings of half-naked, scimitar-bearing, fearsome Muslim warriors became popular in the late 18th century as the United States engaged in its first foreign war after the American Revolution (1775–83) with the North African Barbary pirates. Muslim women of the Orient were also the subject of 19th-century line drawings and paintings that alternately depicted them as debauched harem girls or completely covered and oppressed veiled women. Like Europeans, Anglo- and eventually African-American men played with this exotic dress during the 1800s, especially if they were members of the Shriners, an American fraternal organization founded in the 1870s that adopted Muslim symbols.

The dress of real Muslim Americans in the 19th century sometimes measured up to the exotic expectations of Anglo-Americans and at other times was far more mundane. On southern plantations, where most Muslim Americans of the period lived, Muslim slaves preserved some of the dress practices that were African in origin. BILALI OF SAPELO ISLAND wore a cap similar to a fez and a long coat. In the 1930s, his great-granddaughter, Katie Brown, told an interviewer that her grandmother wore a veil that loosely hung on her shoulders. OMAR IBN SAID (ca. 1770–1864) continued to wear a turban even after he supposedly converted to Christianity, while ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (ca. 1762–1829) was often depicted wearing the long coat and cravat, or neck cloth, of any "fine gentleman" in the early 19th century.

Muslim Americans often combined elements of Euro-American clothing with Islamic clothing from abroad. ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB (1846–1916), a former U.S. consul to the Philippines who converted to Islam in 1888, thus appeared in Chicago at the COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893 in a suit and necktie, though he also wore a white turban. The year before, while still in India, Webb was pictured in the flowing robes of a typically dressed South Asian Muslim man. Later, in 1901, Webb donned a fez and suit after being named the honorary consul of the Ottoman Empire in New York.

There are few records indicating what dress was worn by Muslim immigrants who came to the United States from South Asia and the Middle East after 1865 and before WORLD WAR I. Photographic evidence from early Arab-American communities suggests that most Arab Americans donned

the clothes of their Anglo-American peers, self-consciously attempting to look like other Americans in public, while wearing Middle Eastern-style clothes at Arab community events. Many of those Muslims who married Christians and largely disassociated from their former cultural backgrounds took on the dress characteristics of the dominant local culture. In the case of Punjabi agricultural workers of California who married Catholic women, this cultural style was Mexican American.

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS adopted their Islamic dress from several sources, including Asian Indian missionaries, American fraternal organizations, and Arab-American immigrants. NOBLE DREW ALI, who founded the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America in 1925, looked to the Black Shriners for stylistic inspiration. Men in the movement often wore red or dark-colored fezzes or white turbans with either African-style robes or Western suits. Women wore turbans made of cloth, often red in color, up to 21 feet long and 3 inches wide. They also wore sashes across the front of their dresses. Members wore rings that featured red stars, which were reminiscent of the flag of Morocco.

African-Americans Muslims in the Ahmadiyya movement sometimes adopted South Asian accoutrements to complement their generally American clothes of suits for men and dresses and hats for women. A 1923 photograph of "Four American Moslem Ladies" depicts women who have made some various choices about what they wanted to wear: All are wearing some form of head cover, but three of them are wearing the same hats worn by African-American church women, while only one is wearing a hijab. All of them use large swaths of cloth—perhaps heavy shawls—to cover their necks.

In the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), which was established in 1930 but grew dramatically after 1945, dress was a key element of religious practice. Leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD stressed the need to recover the dignity, modesty, and morals that were, according to him, stolen from blacks first through slavery and later by slavish imitation of whites. Male members wore dark suits, bow ties or neckties, and often red fezzes with crescent designs, while members of the FRUIT OF ISLAM, the all-male auxiliary of the NOI, wore special militarylike uniforms. Female members wore long white dresses and matching short veils for religious services and solid-color dresses and veils at other times. In 1968, Elijah Muhammad directed his followers to avoid African styles of coiffure and kente-style clothing as well, criticizing their growing popularity in the era of black consciousness as a sign that "savage" and "uncivilized" cultures were invading black America.

When Muhammad's son, W. D. MOHAMMED, assumed the leadership of the NOI after Muhammad's death in 1975,

he rid the movement of such strict guidelines, and members began to wear dashikis and Afros more frequently. At the same time, Mohammed reminded men that they were to be neat and women that they were supposed to cover themselves. In 1978, Minister LOUIS FARRAKHAN, who had split with Mohammed the year before, reconstituted a version of the NOI and restored the well-known bow ties and other dress styles preferred in Elijah Muhammad's era.

From the 1920s onward, African-American Muslims also looked to Muslim immigrants and foreign visitors for guidance on Islamic dress, often adapting various elements of immigrant and foreign Muslim dress to their own sense of style and religious observance. By the 1940s, farmers at the New York religious colony established by African-American Sunni Muslim leader MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN, who had traveled to Egypt in the 1930s, wore fezzes, turbans, and hijabs that may have been inspired by Ezaldeen's Egyptian sojourn. In 1950, Daoud Ahmed Faisal, founder of the State Street mosque in NEW YORK CITY, was pictured on the front of his book *Islam* in white Arab-style robes holding a Qur'an as he sat cross-legged on an oriental carpet or perhaps a prayer rug. Faisal had strong ties to Pakistanis, Iranians, and Arabs, though his dress was definitively Arab in style.

After 1965, an increasing number of African-American Sunni and some Shi'a Muslims adopted the dress styles of Muslims in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. Black men often wore Western-style clothes for work, and *thobes*, or long, loose-fitting Middle-Eastern robes, for social occasions and for the Friday midday prayers. Long dresses and hijabs became commonplace for women in African-American Muslim communities. Some women also decided to wear niqabs, or face veils—some for the sake of greater modesty, some for the sake of spiritual growth. In a few communities, niqabs were the standard of dress for all of the women.

As a global religious revival spread throughout the Islamic world in the latter 20th century, Muslims increasingly turned to dress as a form of culture that expressed their religious piety, their rejection of Western colonialism, and sometimes their desire to economize. Some Muslim-American women during the 1980s adopted long gray dresses and scarves, echoing dress styles in Pakistan and Egypt. Some new converts were the most socially conservative in their observance of Islamic dress norms, though other black converts wore African-style outfits that featured long skirts but left the arms uncovered. Still other black converts wore Western and more revealing styles of clothing. Some African-American Muslim women covered their hair only when they prayed. Some tried to find a compromise by combining Western clothes, such as jeans and T-shirts, with a scarf. Others completely avoided wearing Islamic clothing in public because they were afraid of employment discrimination or harassment.



Standing in the surf at Newport Beach, California, Sama Wareh is dressed in swimwear designed for Muslim women. Muslim and non-Muslim designers in the 21st century have created athletic gear that is both comfortable and modest. (AP Photos/Chris Carlson)

### HIJAB AFTER 9/11

After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, the hijab became a particularly controversial symbol of Islam and a lightning rod for all sorts of anti-Islamic rhetoric, confrontation, and legislation in the United States and many places around the world. Efforts to obtain legal protections for women who covered their entire bodies, including the face, generally failed because such dress became associated with potential security threats after 9/11. Police and other law enforcement agencies said that they needed to see the faces of citizens on drivers' licenses and other identification materials. Muslim female travelers, for example, were routinely subjected to physical search by Transportation Security Administration agents even after passing through metal detectors.

*Hijabis*, as Muslim women who wore the hijab were sometimes called, often voiced frustration at the politicization of their attire. American converts were quick to point out that the hijab was not evidence of male domination and oppres-

sion. The female converts were, by definition, persons who voluntarily chose Islam and voluntarily chose to wear the hijab. Muslim women said their real problem was the employment discrimination that resulted from their wearing the hijab. Bans against the hijab and other Islamic attire at the workplace prevented them from participating fully in society.

For example, Muslim-American Bilan Nur, who immigrated to the United States from Somalia in 1998, lost her job at Alamo Rent-A-Car in Arizona for wearing a hijab. After she was fired on December 6, 2001, Nur complained to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The EEOC then filed suit against Alamo on Nur's behalf in September 2002, claiming that under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, employers were obligated to make reasonable accommodations for the practice of religion. According to the EEOC, this religious discrimination against Nur was the commission's first lawsuit addressing post-9/11 backlash against Muslims in the United States. In 2006, the U.S. District Court of Arizona made a summary judgment in favor of Nur, and a jury trial eventually awarded her \$287,000 as a result of the discrimination.

Not all disputes among employers and Muslim employees ended up in the courts. In 2008, the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR) intervened in the case of 30 Somali-American Muslim women who worked for the janitorial firm GCA Services at the Sky Harbor International Airport in Phoenix, Arizona. According to the company, all female employees were required to wear pants. The pants, according to employees, were too tight and exposed the shape of their bodies, which violated their sense of religious modesty. Through negotiations, the parties were able to come to a compromise whereby the women would be allowed to wear skirts instead of the form-fitting pants.

For CAIR, one of whose missions is to fight discrimination against Muslims in the United States, the hijab and Islamic attire more generally became important issues after 9/11. In its 2008 report, *The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States*, it logged more than 100 complaints from Muslim Americans that they had been harassed because of their attire. In fact, wearing a hijab ranked fourth overall in the reasons for discrimination reported by Muslim Americans. That many non-Muslim Americans held prejudicial views of women who wore the hijab was confirmed by a 2008 survey conducted by the marketing firm HCD Research. Though most respondents said that they would be happy for a veiled woman to live in their neighborhood, 38 percent said they would prefer if she lived in another neighborhood, city, or country.

### MEN'S CLOTHING

During the global Islamic revival of the late 20th century, an increasing number of Muslim-American men wore business suits but eschewed neckties, reflecting an older Muslim



ambivalence toward ties. The cravat, or neck cloth, became popular in Europe after the Croatian regiment, whose official dress included a red neck scarf, defeated Muslims of the Ottoman Empire outside Vienna in 1660, effectively ending the advance of Islam into western Europe. Some in the Muslim world regarded it as a cloth symbol of the Christian cross (although there was no historical basis for that assumption) and felt that it was to be avoided on those grounds. Some Muslim men who wore neckties avoided silk ties because of the prohibition of silk for men.

Muslim-American men also increasingly covered their heads with turbans, fezzes, or kufis, small fitted caps without brims. Keeping the head covered was considered respectful, and the head covering was not removed. Muslim men would be seen putting on a kufi as a sign of respect and humility when it was time to pray.

After 9/11, men also faced discrimination as a result of their Islamic attire. In 2006, the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) filed suit on behalf of Abdus Samad N. Haqq, a Muslim prison guard who was told by his employer, the State of New York, that he was not allowed to wear a kufi at work since no employee was allowed to wear headgear. Soon after, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a similar suit against New York, alleging a pattern of religious discrimination against its corrections officers. In 2007, the New York Department of Correctional Services agreed to allow Haqq to wear the kufi, and in 2008, the U.S. attorney in Manhattan announced that the department would issue new regulations to allow all employees an exemption to the ban on headgear.

### ISLAMIC FASHION

Until the late 1980s, many African-American Muslim women sewed their own clothes or had other Muslim women make the clothes for them. In the late 20th century, however, the number of African-American Muslim-owned stores that offered Islamic garb increased. Likewise, Muslim Americans who visited their families of origin in South Asia or the Arab world often brought home clothes that they then wore in the United States. Mail order Islamic clothing businesses such as Caravan Xpress, Modesty, and Al Anwar also arose to satisfy the increased consumer desire for Islamic clothing.

With the advent of the INTERNET in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, there was also an explosion of online businesses that sold Muslim clothing. Muslim-American women were able to order online directly from 2hijab in Egypt or Alhediya in Kuwait. While some women may have dressed in only one style of clothing, many of them chose from a greater variety of styles—from the *abaya*, a large, loose-fitting black garment that was meant to be worn over other garments, to the *salwar kameez*, the Indian tunic, pants, and scarves sets that were popular in India and Pakistan. Muslim-American women's magazines such as

*AZIZAH* and *Muslim Girl* emerged in the 21st century and further promoted the idea that Islamic dress could be an expression of one's individual style.

This global consumer culture for Islamic dress even extended to dolls and sportswear. Young Muslim girls around the world could purchase Razanne, Fulla, and Leen dolls, all of which incorporated Islamic styles of dress in some way. Female Muslim athletes could buy loose-fitting two-piece track suits called "Burqini"—a combination of the words *bikini* and *burqa*—by its Australian designer, Aheda Zanetti. *Time* magazine reported in 2007 that Burqini swimwear had also found a following among non-Muslim women—older women, conservative Christians, women with sunlight sensitivities, and burn victims. Zanetti's company, Ahida, also began making swimwear that was designed with long sleeves, legs, and attached scarves or hoods for hair coverage.

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, a number of Muslim designers came to the fore of American fashion. Bijan Pakzad, known simply as Bijan, and Behnaz Sarafpour are both Iranian-born Muslim Americans who have worked in the world of high fashion, primarily designing clothes for the non-Muslim consumer market. Bijan has also launched fragrances and couture men's clothing. His clients have included celebrities, former presidents, royalty, and heads of state. Similarly, Sarafpour created a high-end clothing line for celebrities and a mass-market line for retail chains. Other Muslim-American designers focused on producing clothes for Muslim clientele. Brooke Samad started the clothing line Marabo, and Nyala Hashmi and Fatima Monkush are preparing to launch the Eva Khurshid line of Muslim clothing.

Events such as the Dubai International Fashion Week brought Muslim and non-Muslim fashion worlds together. Islamic clothing styles challenged the world of high fashion as non-Muslim designers, looking at what has been for them a largely untapped Western market, began trying their hands at interpreting classic dress styles that reflected differing understandings of what it meant to dress modestly in Islam.

### CONCLUSION

The dress of Muslim Americans has been a gauge of the social status of Muslims in the United States. From the late 18th century through the early 20th century, Muslim styles of dress were often represented exotically and playfully by non-Muslim Americans. But as African-American Muslims and an increasing number of immigrant Muslims claimed Islamic dress as their rightful possession, the meaning and function of Islamic attire was transformed. Beginning in the 1920s, Islamic dress increasingly became associated with ethnic identity and religious piety. By the late 20th century, the sheer diversity of Islamic attire was a physical manifestation of the demographic diversity of the Muslim-American community. As more Muslim Americans wore Islamic dress,



such attire also exposed Muslims to potential discrimination while working, traveling, and shopping. Islamic dress became a subject of controversy in U.S. courts as Muslim and non-Muslim Americans debated the public expression of Muslim religious identity in American life.

*Tahira Abdul-Jalil with Edward E. Curtis IV*

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### Druze community

The Druze faith emerged in 11th-century Cairo, Egypt, which was at the time ruled by Ismaʿili Shiʿa Muslims. The founding figure of the faith was Caliph al-Hakim (996–1021), the sixth leader of the Fatimid dynasty, historically regarded as a mystical and divine figure. Sometimes called a sect of Islam, the Druze community has a complicated history of interaction with Sunni Muslims in the Levant—which today includes the nations of Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan—where most Druze currently live. Though Druze teachings have their origins in Islamic thought and practice, several aspects of Druze religious belief and practice differ from those of most other Muslims. For example, Druze, unlike most other Muslims, traditionally believe in reincarnation, partly the result of the influence of classical Greek thought on the group. In addition, they do not seek conversions to their faith, which they have generally kept secret out of fear that they might be oppressed if they are open and public about their beliefs and practices.

Druze first moved to the United States in the late 19th century as part of the large wave of emigration from the Ottoman Empire, especially Syria and Lebanon. Many Druze Americans recognize Malhim Salloum Aboulhousn, who

arrived in the United States in 1881, as one of the first Druze in North America. In 1908, Druze in Seattle, Washington, established the first Druze-American organization, called Albakourat al-Durzeyat, or "First Fruit of the Druze." In 1914, the association held its first national meeting, and by the 1930s, there were approximately 10 chapters of the organization around the country. This first Druze association began to lose support by 1947, when the American Druze Convention, later called the American Druze Society (ADS), was established in Charleston, West Virginia.

Like the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, the ADS held an annual convention that moved from city to city each year; those in attendance conducted organizational business in addition to enjoying music concerts and dancing in the evening. From the beginning, women served as officers of the organization, and in 1961, Julie Mullin Makarem was selected president. Concerned about what seemed to be a waning interest in the faith by Druze-American youths, Abdallah Najjar formed a Committee on Religious Affairs in 1970 that issued a 100-page guide called "The Tawhid [Oneness] Faith: Lessons, Stories, and Prayers."

In 1971, the ADS, celebrating its 25th annual convention, formally established itself as a tax-exempt religious group with the hope of galvanizing various generations of Druze around the country into a common community. During the ADS convention held in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1973, Najjar encouraged delegates to make public the faith's basic teachings. Permission was obtained from Lebanese leaders of the faith to do so, and in 1974, the ADS sponsored the publication of *The Druze Faith*, a book written by scholar Sami Makarim (also spelled Makarem), who had earned his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in Near Eastern studies. In the early 1980s, the ADS also began to publish *Our Heritage*, a community magazine. There were approximately 1,300 dues-paying members and nine chapters of the ADS.

By the early 21st century, the ADS had increased in size to 18 chapters. The INTERNET also became a space where Druze Americans could organize themselves, share their heritage with non-Druze, and offer a free educational curriculum, which taught rudimentary Arabic and introduced Druze children to Druze morals and traditions. Though the ADS did not speak for all Druze Americans, it remained a prominent public face of this community.

The community remained largely separate from Muslim-American organizations and instead forged ties to other Arab Americans in nonsectarian settings. Emphasizing their shared Arabic linguistic and cultural heritage, some Druze Americans joined and supported the work of the AMERICAN-ARAB ANTI-DISCRIMINATION COMMITTEE, which was formed by U.S. Senator James Abourezk, an Arab American of Christian origins, in 1980. Druze Americans

also supported other causes in this decade. Most famously, radio personality and Druze-American CASEY KASEM helped to raise money for presidential candidate Jesse Jackson in 1984 and 1988.

By the early 21st century, some Druze leaders estimated that the community probably numbered in the tens of thousands—perhaps more than 70,000—though there was no reliable census to confirm such estimates.

*Edward E. Curtis IV*

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## ecology

For many Muslim Americans, the ideal approaches to ecological issues such as biodiversity and conservation, pollution, global warming, and resource management have been rooted in their readings of the QUR'AN and the sunna, or "tradition," of the prophet MUHAMMAD. It is in these sources, they believe, that the fundamental relationship of humankind to the rest of nature is described as responsible stewardship. In the late 20th century, Muslim-American scholars and activists systematically articulated various Muslim approaches to the environment, initiated grassroots efforts to spread awareness of ecological and environmental justice issues, started cleanup projects, demanded better treatment of animals being used for food consumption, constructed ecologically sustainable mosques and homes, and implemented alternative forms of energy.

### MUSLIM-AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

In 1966, the Iranian-American scholar Seyyed Hossein Nasr gave his first series of lectures on ecological challenges at the University of Chicago. Published later as *The Encounter of Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* (1968), these lectures outlined how the ecological crisis, according to Nasr, was, in fact, a spiritual one rooted in a break between science and God that allowed applied science to have uninhibited "domination over nature." Throughout his books and speeches, Nasr, writing from a Sufi Muslim perspective, continued into the late 1990s to be the most prominent Muslim-American spokesperson on how Muslim ethical values could foster a harmonious relationship between human beings and the Earth. In 1998, for example, he addressed an international group of Muslim theorists, policy consultants, and environmental justice activists at the Islam and Ecology conference at Harvard University.

A Muslim-American environmental ethic emerged in the 1990s articulated by a growing number of Muslim-American scholars not only responding to the multiple challenges of a global environmental crisis but also to the particularities of the needs in the United States. Nawal Ammar, for example, contributed several articles on Islam and the environment from a theological perspective on the subjects of population,

consumption, and deep ecology (a movement that advocates a radical readjustment of the relationships between human beings and the natural world). Nasr and Ammar, among other Muslim and non-Muslim American scholars, highlighted Qur'anic concepts such as tawhid (unity), *khalifa* (stewardship, vice regency), and *amana* (trust) as the basis of any Muslim-American environmental ethic.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ISLAMIC LAW

In the 1990s and early 2000s, Muslim Americans worked at demonstrating the potential of a Muslim response to ecological issues. Uthman Abd al-Rahman Llewellyn began publishing articles on Islamic jurisprudence and environmental planning in the mid-1980s and spent many years working as an environmental consultant for the government of Saudi Arabia. His publications sought to expand the field of SHARI'A, or "Islamic law," beyond personal and family issues to policy making in areas such as sustainable use of land, conservation of water, and the treatment of animals. Safei El-Din Hamed, an Egyptian-born American, wrote extensively in the 1990s on the application of shari'a to natural resources planning and management and from 1994 to 1996 worked for the World Bank as a specialist in these areas.

### ECOLOGICAL ACTIVISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Muslim Americans have promoted ecological lifestyles in the United States in a variety of ways. Drawing on the poetry of Rumi, Nader Khalili, architect and founder of Cal-Earth, was involved in third world development and sustainable-living projects from 1975. His Eco-Dome design provided not only viable options for homeless and refugee housing but also for conventional housing. Khalili demonstrated another principle of Muslim-American environmental ethics, namely concern for community over the individual. In the first decade of the 2000s, Muslim Americans were becoming more active in the areas of sustainable living and ecological design.

In 2008, the Mosque Foundation of Illinois installed the first solar-powered water-heating system in a U.S. mosque

and also maximized their natural lighting with plenty of windows and skylights. They carpeted their mosque with carpets made from recycled fibers. Also in 2008, the MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY in the San Francisco Bay area initiated the Muslim Green Team, the first Muslim-American grassroots environmental movement. Their goal was twofold: to educate the Muslim community on how to live ecologically and to demonstrate to the general public the Islamic environmental message. Their efforts were focused locally by distributing reusable cloth shopping bags and holding an annual Eco-Fair.

FOOD consumption became a critical issue among Muslim Americans concerned about the environment in the early 21st century. Citing religious DIETARY LAWS that label certain foods permissible and forbidden, Muslims began to demand proper treatment of the animals that provide their meat, milk, and eggs in order for products to qualify as permissible. For example, Muslim Americans demanded that their *zabiha* meat—meat derived from an animal slaughtered in an Islamic fashion—be taken from an animal that had been raised in humane living conditions and had been given feed that does not contain blood, bone, or the waste of other animals, especially pork. A few Muslim Americans also demanded that ecologically sustainable farming practices be used to supply their vegetables and grains. Some began to take part in the growing community-supported agriculture movement and encouraged buying organic and free-trade products.

At its 2008 annual national convention, the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA held its first session on “The Green Muslim Movement.” This session was initiated by the environmental group DC Green Muslims, which was founded in 2007 by a group of young professionals. The idea had germinated at a national conference on Islam and social justice a year earlier but had been limited to a virtual existence online on the Green Muslims Yahoo Group. DC Green Muslims have been active in environmental education, cleanup projects, and organic farming in addition to promoting projects involving Muslims and the broader interfaith community.

In the early 2000s, Ramadan, the month during which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset, became a time for some Muslim Americans to encourage others to reflect on their behavior in ecological ways. Badr Bakry founded the Green Ramadan movement in 2008 and asked Muslims and non-Muslims to exchange one unhealthy habit for one healthy one. He also encouraged them to demand products that are of purer quality and ethically manufactured. In a similar vein, the Ramadan Compact was initiated in 2008 in order to increase awareness of spending habits and consumption practices. The compact was a promise to go the whole month of Ramadan (and for some the whole year) buying only essentials such as food and medicine.

Melinda Krokus

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## education

The experience of Muslim-American students has changed over time but has always involved attempts to fit in to an educational system that was not designed around many of their needs. One of the primary challenges the American educational system posed for Muslims derived from its early 20th-century goal to shape the diverse inhabitants of the United States into somewhat homogeneous U.S. citizens. Schools intended these citizens to be highly patriotic, infused with love for their nation's history, and dedicated to ideas such as freedom and democracy. Becoming an American patriot, however, implicitly included becoming part of the dominant Christian religious culture that had shaped it. For example, in the 20th century, classrooms held Thanksgiving celebrations



in which immigrant children learned to honor their English Pilgrim forebears and to carry the concept of the traditional American turkey dinner back to their families. In this way, American public schools functioned intentionally and strategically as places of ASSIMILATION. In the second half of the 20th century, as American society came to understand itself as multicultural, the educational system became more aware of the needs of minority groups, especially ethnic and racial minorities, but the growing STEREOTYPES of Muslims and Muslim Americans in the late 20th and early 21st centuries imposed a special burden on Muslim-American students. As a result, many Muslim Americans organized their own schools to educate their children. However, the great majority of Muslim Americans have been educated in public schools.

#### PUBLIC EDUCATION FROM 1900 TO 1965

In the early 20th century, U.S. public education posed challenges for immigrant Muslim families in terms of assimilation to mainstream American values. For example, in the comparatively large midwestern ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIM communities of the 1920s, children often started

school speaking only ARABIC. From their families and communities, these children imbibed the values of Syrian culture, including dedication to family honor and obedience to parents. These children were then torn between the cultural norms of their communities and the values of the American school system, which emphasized individualism and independence.

Although these problems had an impact on the entire Arab community, Muslim students often had a more difficult time fitting in because they faced the additional stigma of a different religion. For instance, when interviewed in 1967, Amid Hach of Ross, North Dakota, remembered his children asking, “Daddy, why don’t we go to church?” As reported by the *Fargo Forum*, children were often taunted by classmates for their “non-Christian religion and differing practices.” While many Syrian immigrant parents were concerned about the influence of public education on their children, they were also often unable to understand the pressures the children felt to fit in and the appeal of the surrounding American culture in the forms of cinema, radio, and the values taught in the schools.



The number of Muslim-American children attending Islamic schools increased in the late 20th century as immigrants established more than 100 full-time schools across the nation. (PhotoEdit)

## MUSLIMS AND AMERICAN PUBLIC EDUCATION AFTER 1965

In the middle 1960s, with the passage of the Civil Rights Act and increased immigration from non-European countries, American society, always diverse, became more obviously so and began a shift from an assimilationist, or “melting pot,” model to a more multicultural model of public education. American educational policy began to acknowledge that minority groups might have different and legitimate social needs. Beginning in 1964, a series of acts and laws sought to guarantee students equal opportunity to public education in the United States. There was, however, little agreement about what equal opportunity might mean, a reality that led communities around the country to make different decisions depending on their own needs, resources, and histories. More Muslims in the United States caused public schools to struggle with a number of questions regarding accommodating the needs of the community.

### Prayer

PRAYER stands out as a major area in which schools have had to make accommodations. The “No Child Left Behind Act” of 2001 protects “participation in constitutionally protected prayer in public elementary schools and secondary schools.” “Protected prayer” was understood to mean private religious speech. While students could pray alone or in groups, public schools could not specifically “direct or favor” prayer. The right of Muslim students to pray, however, posed certain challenges to schools. The Muslim salat, or prescribed prayers, must take place at particular times and requires a series of ritual actions, including washing, standing, bowing, prostrating, and sitting. It requires approximately 10 minutes to perform.

Unless schools accommodated students by providing an appropriate place to pray and time to do so, maintaining the practice was impossible. As a result, some schools with large Muslim populations attempted to adjust their schedules to accommodate prayer. For example, in 2006, 100 Muslim students transferred to the Carver Elementary School in San Diego. The school created a second recess so that students who wished to do so could pray without missing instructional time.

The decision proved controversial. As a result of complaints, the school replaced the recess with an additional lunch period. Beyond such logistical issues, the debate in San Diego turned on a specific question: If the school gave Muslim students time and space to pray, must it do so for all students? While many Christian groups, such as the Thomas More Law Center, argued “yes,” the school claimed Muslims were a special case because they needed to pray at specified times during the school day. According to the San Diego School Board, other groups, whose prayer times were not specified, had no such needs.

### Dress Codes

Dress codes and Qur’anic regulations regarding modesty have also posed problems in some communities. For instance, schools are legally permitted to impose dress codes as long as those dress codes do not infringe on religious practice. According to guidelines outlined in *Religious Expression in Public Schools* written by the U.S. Department of Education in 2000, this means that “students generally have no Federal right to be exempted from religiously neutral and generally applicable school dress codes based on their religious beliefs or practices.” At the same time, the policy made clear that “schools may not single out religious attire in general, or attire of a particular religion, for prohibition or regulation.” While such a policy seemed clear—students must follow the dress code, but it may not prevent Muslim girls from wearing HIJAB or Jewish boys from wearing yarmulkes—there was still room for interpretation and therefore conflict.

Many Muslims understand the QUR’AN to require modesty but also to provide no specific set of requirements for what it means to be modestly dressed. As a result, interpretations vary widely between and within different Muslim cultures and even among individuals from similar backgrounds. For example, in the SOMALI MUSLIM IMMIGRANT community that formed in Lewiston, Maine, in the middle 1990s, teenage girls generally agreed that they must cover their hair. There was, however, much variation in this practice, ranging from traditional hijab to wearing a bandana to cover the hair or pulling up the hood of a sweatshirt to cover both hair and neck.

Local school board policy forbade the wearing of all headgear to school. At first, they exempted Muslim girls, allowing them to cover their hair, but as Muslim girls began to experiment with different hijab styles, the Lewiston school board found itself having to specify what was acceptable in order to create a fair policy. Despite fairly strict limits on how Muslim girls could cover their hair, the non-Somali community continued to feel that the Muslim students were receiving special treatment because other girls were not allowed to wear bandanas.

The need for modesty has also posed challenges in physical education and sports. As with most interactions between Muslim teens and American education, there has been wide variety in how groups have dealt with conflicts. On January 12, 2007, Juashaunna Kelly, captain of WASHINGTON, D.C.’s Theodore Roosevelt High School track team, was banned from a meet because she ran with a hooded uniard, a special track suit designed for Muslim women, under her team’s track suit. By contrast, in Springfield, Massachusetts, Bilqis Abdul-Qaadir of the New Leadership Charter High School played varsity basketball from 2004–09 without encountering difficulty about her headscarf and the long sleeves and leggings under her uniform.

Physical education classes in some locales, including Lewiston, Maine, resulted in similar accommodations. In

2001, the Somali community's official liaison explained to the school board that gym class, with its need to change into shorts and T-shirts and to shower after class, would compromise the modesty of the girls in the class according to the standards of the Somali community. The community elders also voiced concern over the co-ed gym classes.

The school agreed to allow the girls to wear sweatpants under their skirts in place of gym shorts and permitted them to opt out of exercises that made them uncomfortable. It is important to note that within the Somali community, gym classes were less problematic for male students, partly because it is more socially acceptable to be active and partly because most Muslim stipulations for male modesty include being covered from the knee to the navel, a need easily accommodated by most athletic clothing.

### School Lunch

Dietary needs also posed particular problems for students in public schools. Many practicing Muslims observe certain **DIETARY LAWS**, principally abstaining from pork and eating meat slaughtered in a certain manner. In communities with large populations of recent Muslim immigrants, such as Dearborn, Michigan, many of the Muslim students were from poor families that strictly observed Muslim dietary laws. Because of their family incomes, these students received food vouchers, but because the school meat was not halal, or religiously permissible, students could not eat the food provided.

As Asaad, a first-generation Yemeni-American Dearborn student (whose last name was protected by a newspaper reporter) said: "If there is no fish, I do not eat." (Fish does not need to be ritually slaughtered.) As a result of the combination of food vouchers and religious observance, in 2001, the Dearborn schools decided to offer halal-approved hot dogs and chicken nuggets at most meals.

In other locales, students have chosen any of a range of responses: eat any available food regardless of its preparation, eat all food except pork, avoid nonhalal meat by eating only vegetarian or fish-based meals, or bring all food from home. Similarly, schools have found a range of responses: require the students to bring food from home or navigate meals on their own, label unacceptable food, or, in schools with very large Muslim populations, arrange for halal meat to be available in the cafeteria.

### School Calendar

Similar questions arose around absence from school for Friday prayers or religious **HOLIDAYS**. Although public schools are ostensibly secular, they were built around a Protestant calendar, ensuring that students were free for worship on Sunday and for Christian holidays such as Christmas. Muslims, like Jews and Hindus, have religious needs not met by this schedule.

Different school systems have responded to the needs of Muslim students in a variety of ways. For instance, in the early 21st century during Ramadan, a monthlong holiday that includes fasting during daylight hours, the Robert E. Lee High School in Springfield, Virginia, allowed Muslim students to spend lunchtime in a classroom rather than in the cafeteria. Additionally, the school informed gym teachers that students might be fasting, so that nonphysical assignments could replace sporting activities. During each day of the holiday, the principal read a statement about Ramadan over the loudspeaker so that the student body would generally be aware of the holiday.

Since some schools in Dearborn, Michigan, are as much as 90 percent Muslim, schools close for at least two days during Ramadan. Other school systems have not been so accommodating. In 2002, Muslim students in Columbus, Ohio's Brookhaven High School scheduled a walkout because the school would not allow them time to pray. That same year, the state of Maryland scheduled mandatory testing during Eid al-Fitr, the final day of Ramadan. While the school agreed to avoid such conflicts in subsequent years and allowed students to make up the test, parents pointed out that school systems would not make such a mistake with Christmas.

### SCHOOLS AS SOCIAL SPACE

As much as schools have been challenged in adapting to the needs of Muslim students, Muslim students have similarly found schools to be an important place in which to form and test their own values. For students from socially conservative families, schools have offered a space in which boys and girls have interacted with each other in ways not often allowed in other settings. Though social interactions have been limited, classrooms offered a safe space for discussion and debate.

In interviews given around the turn of the 21st century, girls in both the Yemeni community of Dearborn, Michigan, and the Somali community of Lewiston, Maine, reported that students policed each other's behavior. Girls noticed and critiqued each other's dress, sometimes leading to fights. Also, behavior in the secular space of the public school had ramifications for the girls' standing in the community. The girls in the Yemeni community in Dearborn felt that their behavior was closely monitored by boys in the community, who often reported infractions back to their parents.

### MUSLIM ALTERNATIVES TO PUBLIC EDUCATION

From the 1930s through the early 2000s, a minority of Muslim Americans sought to educate their children in private or parochial schools rather than in public schools. Beginning in the 1930s, the **NATION OF ISLAM (NOI)** opened schools called the Universities of Islam, later the Clara Muhammad Schools, for their members and other African-American children. The University of Islam covered conventional

academic subjects such as English, math, and chemistry, with home economics classes for girls and drilling (which taught “self control”) for boys.

In addition to an education that prepared students for college, NOI schools strove to give students pride in themselves as black people, a message that NOI members believed was lacking in the public schools. For instance, up until the early 1960s, the Chicago University of Islam used the same textbooks as the public school system. As a result, black people were largely absent from the students’ reading, as few textbooks covered African or African-American history. Then, Christine Johnson, the director of the Chicago University of Islam and an experienced public school teacher, designed an elementary school textbook to replace the standard curriculum. Johnson’s textbook offered African history as well as African-American history in order to provide NOI children with black role models.

In addition, the rhetoric of the schools encouraged students to develop a healthy self-esteem. Sonsyrea Tate describes learning “that they were little gods and goddesses who would someday be leaders” rather than learning about a history of slavery. In addition, Tate writes that in her Washington, D.C., school in the 1970s, the students also learned Arabic and the teachings of the NOI. Children dressed modestly, often following a dress code or wearing uniforms. According to Tate, in her school, good manners were framed as part of being a “little god or goddess.” Proper conduct included silence on the school bus; strict discipline and obedience were expected, and “sport and play” were discouraged.

The solution of operating a separate school system was not an easy option for the NOI. When the NOI opened its first school in Chicago in 1934, the Detroit Board of Education attempted to close the school. Members were accused of trying to recruit students out of the public schools, and official charges were made that the NOI contributed to the delinquency of minors. NOI members—led at that time by W. D. FARD—took to the streets in protest of the decision and succeeded in keeping their school open. NOI schools may have been seen as a threat to the social order by the establishment, but for members, they offered a setting in which students could be shielded from American culture and the damaging messages that it presented to African-American children.

After the number of immigrant Muslims increased dramatically in the latter 20th century, the number of parochial schools that catered to these immigrants’ children also rose. The Council of Islamic Schools in North America reported that there were probably 150 full-time Muslim schools in the United States by the end of the 20th century. In 2004, it was estimated that 20,000 students attended 200 such schools.

NEW YORK CITY alone had 14 such schools, each run independently of the others. While most of these schools ended in middle school, the Al Noor school in Brooklyn

offered both elementary and secondary education. In 1999, almost three-fourths of the student body was American-born, though most of the parents were foreign-born. While Al Noor enrolled both boys and girls, the students were separated by gender at all times in order to adhere to the school’s interpretation of the Qur’an’s directives on modesty. In addition, both students and faculty maintain dress codes that ensure modesty, and in 1999, a female teacher was terminated for failure to maintain the dress code. Specifically, she wore her headscarf loosely, allowing hair to be visible, and often had the top buttons of her long-sleeved overgarment undone.

Al Noor’s educational program met all the standards for New York State education but also included Arabic classes, Islamic studies, Qur’anic recitations, and formal prayer time at the middle of the day. The school maintained relationships with the broader Muslim community through field trips to mosques and by hosting community events. The school also had connections to non-Muslim communities. For instance, it jointly coordinated a volunteer program run with the Maimonides Medical Center, a historically Jewish-American hospital.

In a similar blending of Islamic and secular education, the W. D. Mohammed High School in Atlanta, whose first class graduated in 1992, had a basketball team, a cheerleading squad, an orchestra, and the *ADHAN*, or “call to prayer.” Muslim parents have given numerous reasons for wanting their children to attend Muslim schools, including a desire for a Muslim component to their educations, the wish for their children to have a strong Muslim social world, and concerns about the quality of education available in the public schools.

Still other Muslim families have chosen to homeschool their children. Like their non-Muslim counterparts, families were motivated to homeschool for a variety of reasons. Some parents chose homeschooling out of the sense that they could better educate their children than could a flawed public education system. Others sought a way to include Islamic teachings in their children’s education. Teaching the children at home allowed more of an emphasis on Muslim texts, practices, history, and culture than would have been possible if they were included as a parental supplement to public school. Lastly, some families chose homeschooling as a way to provide an education for their daughters without subjecting them to what the families considered to be problematic coeducational schools.

## CONCLUSION

Since they began to attend public schools in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Muslim Americans have had a variety of reactions to public education. These reactions have reflected the political, racial, and social diversity of the Muslim-American community as a whole. Many immigrant parents have been strong supporters of public education, though by the middle of the 20th century, they were



also concerned about the disappearance of Muslim cultural identity in the sea of civics lessons and values structured to emphasize white, Anglo-Protestant culture. AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, troubled by the poor quality of some public schools or worried about the cultural lessons learned in public education, have sought to establish their own parochial or charter schools run by African-American Muslims. Still other parents, like an increasing number of Americans in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, have chosen to homeschool their children.

Despite the ambivalence toward and the development of alternatives to public education, however, the vast majority of Muslim-American children from 1900 until today have attended public schools, hoping to be respected as religious minorities while being educated alongside the majority of Americans who are not Muslim.

Samira Mehta

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**Eid al-Adha** See HOLIDAYS.

**Eid al-Fitr** See HOLIDAYS.

### Ellison, Keith M. (1963– ) U.S. representative

Keith M. Ellison was the first Muslim elected to Congress. His election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2006 from Minnesota's 5th Congressional District to Congress was a major milestone in the history of Muslim Americans. Born on August 4, 1963, and raised in DETROIT, MICHIGAN, as a Roman Catholic, Ellison converted to Islam at age 19 while attending Wayne State University in Detroit. After completing his law degree at the University of Minnesota Law School in 1990, he worked in several private law firms, and in November 2002, Ellison was elected as a Democrat to the Minnesota House of Representatives. After serving at the state level for two consecutive terms, he won election to the U.S. House of Representatives on November 7, 2006, garnering 56 percent of the vote. In 2008, was reelected with 71 percent of all votes cast.

Ellison took his seat in Congress on January 4, 2007. Appointed to the Judiciary Committee on January 10, 2007, Ellison quickly focused his work in Congress on protecting civil liberties and opposing aspects of President George W. Bush's foreign policy, including the IRAQ WAR. During his election campaign, Ellison had called for an investigation for the impeachment of Bush, and his appointment to the Judiciary Committee, from which the process for impeaching the president would normally begin, was seen as a symbolic victory for those Democrats and others seeking Bush's removal from office. A consistent critic of President Bush's "war on terror," Ellison opposed the so-called surge of troops in Iraq in early 2007 and voted against more funding for the Iraq War without any timetables for withdrawal. Ellison visited several Middle Eastern countries in 2007, including Iraq.

Although Ellison downplayed his religious affiliation during the 2006 campaign, he emerged after his victory as a national figure in Muslim-American affairs. Ellison has been a frequent guest speaker at events organized by Muslim public affairs and advocacy groups and met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and other State Department officials to talk about helping with public diplomacy efforts in the Muslim world.

His connections to the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR) and LOUIS FARRAKHAN, the leader of the NATION OF ISLAM, have caused some controversy. Between 1989 and 1995, Ellison published various articles making the case, contrary to popular opinion, that Farrakhan was not an anti-Semite. In 1998, during his campaign for the Minnesota legislature, Ellison admitted his past affiliation with the Nation of Islam, but he rejected the idea that he had ever had any anti-Jewish attitudes. Campaign contributions he received from CAIR employees also raised concerns due to the organization's alleged links to Hamas, the Palestinian political party and social service agency whose military wing has been responsible for rocket attacks in the south of Israel.



With one hand placed on Thomas Jefferson's copy of the Qur'an, Keith M. Ellison is sworn into the House of Representatives on January 4, 2007, becoming the first Muslim-American member of Congress. (AP Photo/Lawrence Jackson)

Despite such controversy, Ellison embraced his symbolic role as America's first Muslim congressman. For his swearing-in ceremony, he borrowed Thomas Jefferson's copy of the QUR'AN, housed in the Library of Congress. Conservative radio host Dennis Praeger criticized this gesture as "an act of hubris . . . that undermines American civilization," declaring that Americans "incapable" of using the Bible for their oath of office should not serve in Congress. U.S. Representative Virgil Goode (R-Va.) likewise said that liberal U.S. immigration policies would mean "many more Muslims elected to office." Despite the fact that Ellison was an African American, Goode discussed Muslims and Islam as foreign to the United States. If immigration patterns continued, he warned, "we are leaving ourselves vulnerable to infiltration by those who want to mold the United States into the image of their religion, rather than working within the Judeo-Christian principles that have made us a beacon of freedom-loving persons around the world."

Ellison has drawn a profile of a moderate Muslim who advocates for Muslim interests yet does so using nondivisive language by referring to human rights, equality for all, and fulfilling democratic ideals. He has been criticized as being too modern or lenient by extremists and has been praised by moderate Muslims as standing up for his beliefs in a "smart" way using the rules of the system. As the first Muslim elected to Congress, Ellison has paved the way for other Muslim hopefuls to run for office.

*Eren Tatari*

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### **Congressman Keith M. Ellison on Interfaith Dialogue (2008)**

*On September 23, 2008, Rep. Keith M. Ellison (D-Minn.), one of the two Muslim members of Congress, cosponsored a congressional resolution with Rep. Zach Wamp (R-Tenn.), a Southern Baptist, lauding recent interfaith dialogues among Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Wamp's and Ellison's cosponsorship of the resolution was noteworthy since they disagreed about most political issues. House Congressional Resolution 374 showed the growing commitment of many Americans after September 11, 2001, to engage in religious dialogue with one another.*



Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I know that it's protocol and important to thank the Chair of the committee and the ranking member, but today, I have to convey my very sincere and heartfelt thanks to Chairman Berman and to Ranking Member Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. Of course, I have to also thank my dear friend Zach Wamp, who came to me many months ago and proposed that we offer this resolution together.

I believe this is an historic day, and I am deeply humbled. Other than the day that I had to come here before the House to talk about the collapse of our bridge in Minneapolis, I feel the most sense of emotion and of weight and of gravity today.

I also want to point out that this resolution that comes to the floor today takes place during a very special time for people of the Muslim faith, which is the month of Ramadan—a month of reflection, of fasting and, based on this resolution's coming to the floor, of good things as well.

The passion that my colleague Mr. Wamp and I share for this resolution may strike some Members as unusual, but it shouldn't. Indeed, as Members of Congress on different sides of the political aisle, Mr. Wamp and I may not always agree on policy, but we are two men who have come together as people of faith to highlight what we both believe are historic interfaith developments within the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths.

In late 2007, 138 Muslim scholars from every sect of Islam, representing communities of faith in countries both friendly and hostile to the United States, sent a letter to Christian leaders everywhere, declaring common ground between our faiths and seeking dialogue among leaders of two traditions that represent nearly half the world's population.

Responding to that letter, some 300 Christian leaders, including many leaders in the United

States, declared in November 2007 their appreciation and support for this historic outreach. In March 2008 the Vatican announced that the Pope had invited these scholars to a first-ever summit, which will meet in Rome in November 2008.

I believe the mutual respect by all participants in this effort holds tremendous transformative power, not only for relations between Christians and Muslims, but also for Islam's entire relationship with the West.

I believe it is in the best interests of the United States to support and encourage those efforts so that the world knows that our Nation stands with those people who reject extremism and violence and hate and embrace reconciliation.

Let me read from the resolution: "It is the sense of Congress . . . that the United States encourages the many people of faith around the world who reject terrorism, radicalism, and extremism to join these and similar efforts to build a common bond based on peace, reconciliation and a commitment to tolerance. . . . Furthermore, the United States appreciates those voices around the world who condemn terrorism, intolerance, genocide and ethnic and religious hatred, and instead commit themselves to global peace anchored in respect and understanding among the adherents of the three Abrahamic faiths," Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

Today, our world knows too many people who are divided, rather than healed, by faith. I speak for myself, but I am sure most Members of the House would agree that our religious faith is a great source of strength and has the transformative effect of bringing people together, not pushing them apart.

I believe this resolution will serve to send a strong message to people everywhere that Members of the House stand in solidarity with members of the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faith as they confront ancient and modern divisions so that peace may prevail. It is brought up during a particularly special month for me.

I urge my colleagues to support this truly bipartisan resolution.



*Source: Congressional Record (House), September 23, 2008, H8655-H8657. Available online. URL: [wais.access.gpo.gov](http://wais.access.gpo.gov). Accessed January 26, 2009.*

**Eric B. and Rakim** (1965– ; 1968– ) *hip-hop artists*

The hip-hop duo of Eric Barrier—known as Eric B.—from Elmhurst, Queens, and William Griffin of Wyandach, Long Island—who took the name Rakim Allah after he converted to Islam—teamed up in 1985 under the name Eric B. and Rakim. In 1987, Rakim Allah was one of the first MCs to openly declare membership in the FIVE PERCENTERS, which emerged from the NATION OF ISLAM. The rise of the Five Percenters coincided with the burgeoning HIP-HOP culture in the 1970s. These primarily youth movements, which had a strong presence in New York, provided the cultural context from which Eric B. on the turntables and Rakim providing the lyrics emerged as a popular hip-hop group. They faced competition from other rap groups that supported the Nation of Islam, such as Public Enemy.

Eric B. and Rakim helped to define the genre with their debut single, “Eric B. is President,” on Harlem’s Zakia label, and album, *Paid in Full* (1987), on 4th and B’Way Records. Following this success, they signed with MCA Records, which produced *Follow the Leader* (1988) and *Friends* (1989). In 1989, Eric B. and Rakim contributed to Jody Watley’s top-10 single “Friends.” One year later, Eric B. founded two talent agencies, Lynn Starr Productions and Mega Starr Management. They contributed “What’s on Your Mind” for the *House Party II* soundtrack (1991) and “Know the Ledge” for the film score of the movie *Juice* (1992).

While their first three albums went gold, later works, *Let the Rhythm Hit ’Em* (1990) and *Don’t Sweat the Technique* (1992), were less successful. In the mid-1990s, Eric B. went solo on his own 95th Street Records label. Rakim also released solo albums entitled *The 18th Letter* (1997) and *The Master* (1999). In 2008, he assembled a compilation album, *The Archive: Live, Lost & Found*.

Eric B. is credited with popularizing the trend of “sampling” pop songs in hip-hop music. Rakim’s legacy includes his complication of the lyrical style and rhyming schemes of the hip-hop genre. Seeking cultural and ancestral ties to Africa and the promotion of a positive sense of black identity, Five Percenters such as Rakim Allah are some of the most recent incarnations of black nationalist and Afrocentric thought among African Americans and Muslim Americans in the United States.

Julius H. Bailey

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**Ertegun, Ahmet** (1923–2006) *Atlantic Records founder, chairman of Rock and Roll Hall of Fame*

One of the giants of the American music industry, Turkish American and secular Muslim Ahmet Ertegun founded

Atlantic Records, promoted Ray Charles, discovered Led Zeppelin and Dr. John, and, in 1983, cofounded the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation. He also produced some of the best known songs in the world, including “Splish Splash” and “Mack the Knife.” Ertegun’s business adventures also included the establishment of New York’s soccer team, the Cosmos, for whom he served as president.

Born on July 31, 1923, in Istanbul, Turkey, Ahmet Ertegun was raised as a Muslim. His father was Turkish diplomat Mehmet Munir Ertegun, and his mother was Hayrunisa Rustem. Ertegun was raised in Switzerland, France, and England. In 1934, Ertegun and his family moved to Washington, D.C., for his father’s new diplomatic post. His older sibling, Nesuhi, introduced him to the music business, taking him to meet musicians such as Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway. Ertegun and Nesuhi went on to establish an extensive music record collection. In 1944, Ertegun graduated from St. John’s College in Annapolis, Maryland, and went on to pursue a graduate degree in medieval studies at Georgetown University. Dropping out of school when his father died in 1946, Ertegun entered the record business.

In September 1947, Ertegun joined dental student Herb Abramson in creating Atlantic Records, a record label that would promote jazz, gospel, and rhythm and blues music. The New York City–based label released 22 unsuccessful records until “Drinkin’ Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee” by Stick McGhee came out in 1949. In the 1950s, the company signed Ray Charles, Joe Turner, and the Drifters, and Ertegun himself wrote hit songs such as “Mess Around” under the alias of Nugetre (his last name spelled backward). In the 1960s, Atlantic joined Stax Records to promote the music of Albert King and Aretha Franklin. One of Ertegun’s major successes during this era was the signing in 1965 of the rock group the Rascals, who recorded 13 Top 40 singles. In 1967, Ertegun and his partner, Jerry Wexler, sold Atlantic Records to Warner Brothers for \$17 million. In 1971, Ertegun signed the Rolling Stones—an association that lasted 14 years.

In addition to helping with the creation of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio, Ertegun was a leading figure in the founding of the Rhythm and Blues Foundation, which sought to aid blues artists who had been underpaid throughout their careers. In 1991, Ertegun received an honorary doctorate degree in music from the Berklee College of Music in Boston. In 1993, he was awarded the Grammy Trustee Award for his lifetime achievements, and in 2005, he received the President’s Merit Award from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

On October 26, 2006, Ertegun fell during a performance by the Rolling Stones in New York City honoring former president Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton.



Ertegun's injuries worsened, he fell into a coma, and he died on December 14, 2006. His burial was held four days later in the Garden of Sufi Tekke in Istanbul, Turkey, where his great-grandfather had been a master sheikh. Though Ertegun had been the target of criticism throughout his career for his secular attitudes and lack of attention to Turkish issues, several Turks joined musicians such as Kid Rock to mourn his passing. Few entrepreneurs had a greater impact on popular music in America than Ahmet Ertegun.

*Edward E. Curtis IV with Samar Samara-Alkhayyat*

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### Estevanico (ca. 1500–ca. 1539) explorer

Estevanico was probably one of the first Muslims to set foot in the Americas. Born in an ARABIC-speaking city on the northwest African coast around 1500, Estevanico was impressed into an early 16th-century Spanish colonial expedition as a nobleman's slave and became a valuable interpreter and intermediary during two ill-fated incursions into North America. He spent his early years in Azemmour, a predominantly Muslim city in modern-day Morocco known for its wheat production and fishing along the banks of the Oum er Rbia River. During Estevanico's childhood, this lush coastal region became the site of conflict between North African Berbers and the Portuguese, who had begun to enslave West African captives in these seminal years of the Atlantic slave trade.

Historians have discovered little about Estevanico's ethnic and cultural background, though he was referred to as a Moor, a North African Muslim. The circumstances of his capture and enslavement are similarly unclear, though by 1527, he was the property of Castilian nobleman Andrés Dorantes and given the Christian name Estevanico. In this early period of Atlantic slavery, Queen Isabel of Spain and her royal officials struggled to define who could be legally enslaved. Although Spanish chroniclers of his time referred to Estevanico as a Christian, his name and description were more likely attempts to justify his enslavement according to Queen Isabel's rules than indicators of his actual religious identity.

In 1527, Estevanico and his owner, Dorantes, set sail for Cuba, joining about 600 people in an expedition planned by conquistador Pánfilo de Narváez. A leader in the Spanish conquest of Cuba and Jamaica, Narváez had been jailed for attempting to overthrow his rival, Hernando Cortés, in New Spain (present-day Mexico), but he had secured royal

license to explore and conquer the territory from the northern boundaries of New Spain to Florida. Estevanico's owner, Dorantes, was appointed a captain in the expedition. After obtaining supplies in Cuba in March 1528, Narváez intended to sail west and land near the Pánuco River on the western side of the Gulf of Mexico, but a combination of inept piloting, challenging ocean currents, and inclement weather brought them to shore near Tampa Bay on the west coast of Florida. Many men died of illness or Indian attacks during their five months of travel north through Florida's swamps, and the ships ordered to follow and resupply the footsoldiers along the coastline lost track of the group on land. In a desperate move, Narváez decided to build rafts and try to float to Mexico. Keeping the rafts together proved impossible, and most of the remaining members of the expedition, including Narváez, drowned or disappeared into the Gulf of Mexico.

Although his boat capsized, Estevanico was one of 80 men able to land on Galveston Island off the coast of Texas, and he was one of only 15 to survive the winter there. Estevanico left the island with Dorantes and a small group determined to find New Spain, but after reaching the mainland, Indians took them captive. For more than six years, Estevanico worked alongside his Spanish owner. When a shipwrecked Spanish survivor left Galveston Island in 1534, he found Estevanico, Dorantes, and one other man still in captivity. The group fled and posed as healers and spiritual leaders in their two-year trek across Mexico to the Pacific coast.

During this overland trip, Estevanico's companions noted his ability to communicate with Native Americans through hand signals and what they thought were indigenous languages. His appearance fascinated the Native American communities that he visited, and he carried a gourd rattle and wore gifts that he received for his healing, including colorful feathers, bells, and turquoise. In 1536, Spanish slave-raiders in northwest Mexico found Estevanico and his three companions dressed like Indians and returned them to the Spanish colonial capital, where Dorantes sold Estevanico to Viceroy Antonio Mendoza.

Galvanized by rumors of a wealthy civilization to the north, Mendoza dispatched Estevanico to guide another Spanish incursion into Indian territory. Many Native communities recognized him during his last trek, but Estevanico never returned to New Spain. The 16th-century Spanish chroniclers offered varied reports of his death in a Zuñi Pueblo town in present-day New Mexico. Estevanico's spiritual prowess, demands for gifts, or enemy traveling companions may have offended the Pueblos, which led to his capture and death around 1539. In life as well in death, this young North African man personified the negotiation and blurring of cultural, linguistic, and territorial boundaries in the early modern world.

*Jonathan Todd Hancock*

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**ethics** See ISLAMIC THOUGHT; RELIGIOUS LIFE; SHARI‘A.

### ethnicity

Ethnicity refers to a common characteristic that distinguishes a group within a larger society or geographic area. Characteristics that might foster such a distinctive social identity include a shared language, family genealogies, regional experiences, or religious practices. While the category of "race" refers to the assignment of certain biological similarities to a group, "ethnicity" usually refers to cultural similarities. In practice, however, the words *race* and *ethnicity* have overlapping meanings. Until the advent of Islam in the seventh century, for example, the word *Arab* may have referred more to a *racial* identity than to an *ethnic* minority. To describe someone in the 21st century as an "Arab Muslim" is to offer a shorthand profile in ethnicity, one that combines a racial description, a geographic origination, and a common set of cultural practices in one brief descriptive marker.

The history of the word *ethnicity* (and *ethnic*) has included associations with minority factions presumed to be different from a majority. In such contexts, *ethnicity* has had negative connotations, so that the "ethnic" individual is often designated as pagan, primitive, or tribal as opposed to Christian, civilized, and assimilated. During the last decades of the 20th century, however, the word *ethnicity* became an important category of scholarly analysis as well as a political designation taken up by many formerly colonized groups who sought to reclaim their "ethnic" characteristics as viable sites of corporate organization and personal pride.

In the context of global Islam, ethnicity is a sociological reality, as there is a vast array of regional and cultural Muslim groups. Ethnicity is also a theological challenge, since the QUR‘AN emphasizes that the Islamic community should be unified. To practice Islam is to practice a religion that seeks to connect people beyond all borders, national or cultural. Although the Qur‘an prescribes this universal egalitarianism among all believers, within the lived practice of Islam ethnic differentiations can create hierarchy. For instance, those Muslims claiming descent from the prophet MUHAMMAD

often enjoy religious prestige and some legal entitlements. Likewise, some Muslim sectarian movements, such as Ahmadis and some Sufis, are considered outside orthodox descriptions of Islam.

By the beginning of the 21st century, the three largest ethnic subgroups of Muslim Americans were SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, and AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS. From the colonial era onward, the Muslim-American community was one marked as a minority within a majority culture that was different racially and religiously. The first Muslims to arrive in significant numbers were enslaved Africans. After that forced migration, the first voluntary Muslim arrivals were largely Arabs from Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan, though European Muslims from other parts of the Ottoman Empire also came. After the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 was enacted, large numbers of South Asian Muslims, along with groups of Arabs and Iranians, immigrated to the United States. More recently, Afghani Muslims began to settle in America in the 1980s, and Somali, Bosnian, and other refugees arrived in the 1990s.

For most of Muslim-American history, the ethnic identities of Muslims in the United States, whether they are "indigenous" African-American Muslims or "immigrant" Muslims, have also been diasporic, meaning that they identify with other ethnic communities that have been dispersed through forced or voluntary migration. Most Muslim Americans have also been regarded in the United States as persons of color. Studies of these communities in the United States reveal simultaneously the pursuit of a united Islamic front as well as some social fault lines among these different subgroups. After 1965, for example, immigrant Muslims representing South Asian and Middle Eastern ethnic groups frequently identified themselves with whites rather than blacks, seeking to move to neighborhoods more Anglo-American than African American. Likewise, 21st-century statistics have suggested that the children of Arab and Pakistani Muslim immigrants marry white Muslims more frequently than African-American Muslims.

This divide between immigrant and indigenous American Muslims sets up a false dichotomy. The history of African-American Islam exemplifies the transnational aspect of American Islam, as black converts always regarded their ethnic identity as more than "American" and sought to share in a global Islamic religious identity. In naming themselves "Muslim," these African Americans placed themselves in an ethnic subgroup within a broader Protestant-American culture, but they did not do so with exclusively racial self-understanding.

While most contemporary Muslim Americans identify themselves as a part of the global *umma*, many also maintain attachments to their ethnic bonds, gathering in study groups

oriented by native languages, regional practices, or cultural habits. Hundreds of groups and centers have been established along such ethnic lines. At the same time, Muslim Americans, referring to the prophet Muhammad's negative views regarding tribalism, have attempted to establish MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS that embody ethnic diversity. The Islamic Center of Greater Toledo, for example, has a formal paid membership of some 300 families (about 1,500 individuals) representing more than 30 different national and ethnic backgrounds.

Kathryn Lofton

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### Everlast (1969– ) musician

Everlast, also known by his stage name, "Whitey Ford," borrowed from the New York Yankee baseball player, is a Grammy Award-winning Irish-American hip-hop artist known for the hit single "What It's Like." Born Erik Schrody on August 18, 1969, in Valley Stream, New York, he was originally Catholic. Exposed to Islam through more than 10 years of contact with the Bashirs, a Muslim family in his neighborhood, Schrody has said that his initial interest in Islam blossomed as he came to learn more about the role of prophets, including both Jesus and MUHAMMAD, in the Islamic tradition. "The words and the exemplary life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad," he said, "are a direct way to God and the connection to the truth. 'Islam is like gas into the car.'" Schrody also believed that Islam was a practical faith.

Schrody's introduction to hip-hop in New York and Los Angeles in the 1980s led to his membership in the Rhyme Syndicate, a group of rappers who worked with Ice-T. It was then that he came to be known as Everlast. In 1990, he left the Rhyme Syndicate to release his first solo album, *Forever Everlasting*. Following this album's critical and commercial failure, Schrody formed the group House of Pain with two friends that lasted until 1996.

Schrody officially converted to Islam and said his *shahada*, or Islamic "declaration of faith," in 1996. Despite fre-

quent world tours and a busy schedule, Schrody has said that he still practiced the Five Pillars of Islam, finding only the daily PRAYERS difficult to uphold. He started with one prayer daily and gradually moved from one to five, even when traveling. He made up missed prayers in the evening to ensure that he had prayed at least five times each day and sometimes performed the supererogatory, or extra, prayers.

Schrody's conversion to Islam allowed him to cultivate a broader nonwhite audience, and Schrody developed fans in predominantly black urban neighborhoods. *Whitey Ford Sings the Blues* was Schrody's first solo studio album. Released in 1998, it includes many songs with references to Islam and his personal journey from a lifestyle of "alcohol and nicotine" during his early hip-hop career to the practice of an Islamic lifestyle.

Schrody had said that God sends angels to record the actions and intentions of humans. Only the intentions of mankind are judged by God. "Allah is mercy, mercy, mercy," Schrody said, "and therefore I wrote the piece 'Mercy.'" In the song "Graves to Dig," Schrody references the prophet Muhammad and Islam and includes the *shahada* as part of the lyrics.

With the encouragement of musician Carlos Santana, Schrody also included the *shahada* in "Put Your Lights On," his Grammy Award-winning collaboration with the famous artist. Previously, Schrody expressed doubt about including the declaration of Islamic faith because he "did not want to sell Allah's words." Santana contacted Schrody following a dream in which an angel told him to seek out Everlast for the collaboration, and Schrody changed his mind.

Schrody released three subsequent albums. The first of these was a 1999 EP, shorter than a full-length album, entitled *Today*. This shorter album featured "Put Your Lights On," new songs, and live recordings. *Eat at Whitey's* followed the EP in 2000 and included the song "Black Jesus," in which he recounts his journey as a musician. In 2004, Schrody released *White Trash Beautiful*, his third studio album, which was noted for mixing folk blues and his older hip-hop style.

In 2008, Schrody released a new solo album. He funded the record with his own recording label, Martyr, Inc., and created a personal Web log to allow fans to track the status of his label and album.

Andrew O'Brien

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**Ezaldeen, Muhammad (1886–1957) *founder of the Addeynu Allahe Universal Arabic Association***

Muhammad Ezaldeen founded the ADDEYNU ALLAHE UNIVERSAL ARABIC ASSOCIATION, an early Sunni Muslim organization comprised predominantly of African Americans, in the late 1930s. Ezaldeen, who received his religious education in Egypt in the 1930s, was a pioneering figure in the spread of Sunni Islam among African Americans. Perhaps his most noteworthy contribution was the design of a religious curriculum that both adhered to the main teachings of Sunni Islamic tradition and addressed the particular social and political concerns of African Americans.

Ezaldeen was born James Lomax on October 14, 1886, in Abbeville, South Carolina. After attending school in Columbia, South Carolina, he traveled north to CHICAGO, where he was a founding figure of the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America (MST) in 1926. He was appointed to lead the MST temple in Detroit. In a 1928 photo, Lomax appears directly next to NOBLE DREW ALI, perhaps symbolizing his proximity to power in the MST. During this decade, he was also known as Lomax Bey and Ali Mohammed Bey and became a regional governor of the group, but in 1929, after political infighting, Ezaldeen left the MST and never returned.

In 1930, Ezaldeen reportedly traveled to Turkey under the name Ali Mohammed Bey to deliver a petition to Turkish leader Kemal Ataturk on behalf of African Americans facing prejudice and legal segregation in the United States. The petition included a proposal to relocate a group of his followers to Turkey to settle on any underpopulated farming land. Harkening back to the ideal of the yeoman farmer who could determine his own fate, the idea that African Americans could be free only by owning and farming their own land had deep roots in U.S. and African-American history. For Ezaldeen, land was the key to the liberation of 20th-century blacks still largely economically dependent on whites. Although Ezaldeen's hopes to relocate to Turkey did not materialize, reports of his travels abroad caught the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which regularly tracked African Americans who had any ties to foreign persons or states.

In 1931, Ezaldeen traveled to Egypt, where he remained until 1936. During his five years in this Muslim country, Ezaldeen studied Islamic religious traditions under the auspices of the General Centre World Young Men Muslim Association, which reported that he "embraced Islam, and stayed in the hospitality and good care of the General Centre for five years." According to other reports, he also studied, although to a lesser extent, ancient Egyptian culture and history and was trained to be a tour guide of the historical sites. Ezaldeen may have also studied at al-Ahzar University, one of the oldest continuously operating universities in the world, but evidence for that claim is inconclusive.

Once he returned to the United States, Ezaldeen put his training to use by establishing an organization devoted to community development and the teaching of the QUR'AN and the sunna, or the traditions of the prophet Muhammad. From 1936 to 1938, he lived in PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, where he tried to establish the Addeynu Allahe Universal Arabic Association (AAUAA) in August 1938. The first branch formally incorporated was in Camden, New Jersey, in August 1938. Unable to secure a charter by state officials, he left for Buffalo, New York, where, it is reported, some local residents were anxious to learn Arabic. On October 29, 1938, Ezaldeen was chosen as imam, or leader, of a nascent community of black Muslims, and sometime thereafter, he incorporated a unit of the AAUAA in West Valley, New York.

Over the next five years, Ezaldeen's followers contributed part of their salaries, often earned in factories around Buffalo, to the purchase of a farm. Called Jabul Arabiyya, or the "Mountain of Arabic-Speaking People," this farm became the first headquarters of the AAUAA. Ezaldeen instructed members to build homes, a mosque, stores, and a jail so that they could establish their community life and govern themselves according to SHARI'A, or Islamic "law and ethics." Financial and social challenges brought hardship, but a 1946 article in the *Buffalo Courier-Express* pictured a vibrant, if poor, farming community that tended to livestock and educated children in a small house on the farm. Another unit of the AAUAA soon emerged in Hammonton, New Jersey, outside Philadelphia, now called Ezaldeen Village.

In 1941, Ezaldeen relocated to NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, where he eventually moved his headquarters above a curtain shop at 95 Prince Street. It is unclear why he moved to Newark. One observer has speculated that the move may have had something to do with the wishes of his wife, Set or Karema, who at one point may have also been a Moorish American. She lived in the East Ward of Newark upon her death in 1995. Prince Street had become a thriving commercial center, and there was an active MST community in the vicinity at 230 Court Street. An article in the *Newark Evening News* of September 26, 1940, states that by that year there were more than 1,200 members of the MST there.

Ezaldeen proceeded with the establishment of the new AAUAA unit, which became a competitor to the program and teachings of the MST. The AAUAA offered courses on the Qur'an, the sunna, the Hametic (Black) Arab heritage, and the ARABIC language. Tensions between the MST and the AAUAA were evident but kept to a minimum and did not contain Ezaldeen's influence. Wahab Arbubakar, a student of Ezaldeen's, recalled that when he met Ezaldeen, he spoke about the one true Allah, the prophets, the holy books, and the hereafter. Arbubakar had not known much about Islam prior to meeting Ezaldeen; he recalled that the most profound religious teaching he heard from Ezaldeen was the



*al-fatiha* (opening chapter of the Qur'an) and the *ADHAN*, or "call to prayer."

Ezaldeen also taught his students that the term *Arab* was a linguistic term and not a racial one. Although he taught that the original Arabs were black (Hametic), the emphasis in his teachings was placed on language and faith, not race, as the highest form of identification for a person. Malik Arbubakar, son of Wahab Arbubakar, stated that "Professor Ezaldeen was keen to pointing out that we were Hametic Arabs and he taught us that just because our foreign-born brothers and sisters came from Arabia and other Muslim countries, did not give them any greater claim on al-Islam than we had."

Ezaldeen adopted two flags for the organization. One symbolized the belief in the Islamic faith and the other was the flag of the United States of America. The first was described as the Universal Al-Islamic flag. Green in color, it featured two crossed golden swords and Arabic writing containing the declaration of Islamic faith that "There is no god but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God." This flag and the U.S. flag came to symbolize Ezaldeen's desire for a marriage between what he described as the best of Eastern and Western values. Ezaldeen thought of Islam as an integral part of the American identity of African Americans.

In 1943, Ezaldeen joined WALI AKRAM (1904–94), a former Ahmadi Muslim American and founder of the Sunni Muslim mosque in CLEVELAND, in an effort to unite Sunni AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS around a common agenda. Ezaldeen's work in propagating the faith, especially among African Americans, had been recognized by Akram, and together they organized a meeting to establish the Uniting Islamic Society of America (UISA). Its 1943 conference, held in Philadelphia, was hosted by Ezaldeen's AAUAA, and Akram was elected president of the new organization. As president, he drafted a "Muslim Ten Year Plan" and assigned responsibilities to the delegates. Ezaldeen was given a prominent role as spiritual adviser to the group, and members of the AAUAA were also assigned to important posts.

Differences of opinion between Akram and Ezaldeen on matters of religion, *dawah* methodology, and community development, however, curtailed the organization's progress, and it dissolved by 1946. The backgrounds of both men were factors that contributed to some of the disagreements. While Akram had been a Muslim in the United States for at least 20 years, Ezaldeen had been the only one from America to formally study Islam in a Muslim country. The knowledge and political recognition that Ezaldeen acquired from Egypt certainly helped to legitimize him as an authentic teacher of Islam in the United States.

As Ezaldeen's reputation for being a learned man in the religion grew, especially in the Mid-Atlantic States, he attracted more members to the AAUAA. Among his most prominent students in the Newark and New York area were Wahab Arbubakar, Hesham Jaaber, Akeel Karam, Musa Hamad, and Daoud Ghani. In Newark, even followers and sympathizers of NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD would sometimes visit Ezaldeen when he established the AAUAA on Prince Street because they respected him for his knowledge of Islam. Members of the Council of the Brothers, a social reform organization of the 1950s, would sit down with Ezaldeen and listen to his teachings.

In the years after the last conference organized by the UISA, Ezaldeen's health began to deteriorate. He suffered health problems after having stepped on a nail while building a house for his family in West Valley. His leg had to be amputated, and then he lost his remaining leg due to a life-threatening infection. He used a wheelchair for the rest of his life. Many people, both local and foreign, continued to visit him at his Prince Street location in Newark. By the 1960s, the AAUAA unit that Ezaldeen founded in Newark remained small compared to the growing local branch of the Nation of Islam, but it retained its status as a national association. Members could be found in Hammonton, Whitesboro, and Newark, New Jersey; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Cleveland; Columbus; Buffalo; Rochester, New York; and Jacksonville, Florida.

Ezaldeen died on June 5, 1957, and was buried at Rosehill Cemetery in Linden, New Jersey. Throughout his life, Ezaldeen shared his knowledge of Sunni Islam and confronted the racism suffered by his followers. He played a major role in helping to establish Islam as a lasting part of African-American and American religious life.

M. Naeem Nash

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## families

Muslim-American family life in the United States has been as diverse as the **DEMOGRAPHICS** of Muslims in the country. The structures of Muslim families have included nuclear families consisting of parents and children, single-parent households, and extended family households that include grandparents or other relatives as part of the nuclear family. Most Muslim Americans, no matter how their family is arranged, have viewed the family as the proper place for the physical, emotional, and educational development of children. The family has signified a network of kin, a source of ethical values, and the place where those values have been upheld. Family values have often included an emphasis on hard work, the maintenance of spirituality and religious identity, and the importance of education. Despite these shared characteristics, it is important to recognize that the kinds of Islamic values taught and level of adherence to **SHARI‘A**, or Islamic “**LAW** and ethics,” have varied widely among Muslim-American families.

### **BLACK MUSLIMS FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM**

The history of the Muslim-American family began in slavery. Black Muslim-American families who were enslaved from the 17th century until 1865 often had little control over their destinies. As a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, African-Muslim fathers, mothers, and children were abducted and sold to other human beings in the Americas. The domestic slave trade in the United States worked in a similar fashion, tearing apart the families of native-born African Americans. Like other slaves, Muslims were forced to adapt to these conditions, establishing informal networks of kinship in which aunts and uncles, whether related or not, would raise children when their parents were sold. Muslim slaves, like other slaves, also had to endure the constant threat of violence for a perceived or actual slight to a slave owner or an overseer. This included the threat of sexual violence toward mothers and daughters who attempted to refuse the sexual advances of masters.

In this oppressive atmosphere, **AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS** faced overwhelming challenges in passing along their religious traditions to their children. **ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA** (ca. 1762–1829), an enslaved Muslim American

who gained his freedom in the late 1820s, was able to raise enough money to free some of his children and arrange for their passage to Africa, but he was a rarity. Without the extensive network of Islamic religious schools and religious courts that existed in West Africa, where many slaves had originated, maintaining **ARABIC** literacy in the United States, which several first-generation slaves possessed, was unlikely in America. Still, where slaves were relatively isolated in black-majority settings, such as the **GEORGIA SEACOAST**, multigenerational Muslim family life continued. There, the children of Muslim slaves often carried common African-Arabic names, such as Bilal, Fatimah, and variations of the name Muhammad. They were taught how to keep the daily prayers, how to cook African Islamic **FOOD**, and how to dress modestly.

Though there is little direct historical connection between the practice of Islam among slaves and the later conversion of many African Americans to Islam in the 1920s and beyond, the heritage of slavery—and later, Jim Crow segregation and mob violence—are important to understanding family life among 20th-century African-American Muslims. African-American Muslim families have responded creatively to the economic, health, educational, and other social disparities that were perpetuated until the end of legal segregation in the 1960s. Developing kinship ties that extended beyond actual blood relations, “grandmothers” and “aunties” especially often cared for children whose parents had to work or were otherwise unavailable. Though African Americans were the poorest of all racial and ethnic groups in the United States, they were, according to sociologist Thomas M. Shapiro, also more generous than Anglo-Americans with in-kind donations to family and friends who were out of work or otherwise short of cash.

Many African-American Muslim women in the 1960s joined the **NATION OF ISLAM (NOI)** because they found its emphasis on family life and its protective attitude toward females to be attractive. The NOI prohibited members from premarital sexual relations, with violators subject to suspension or expulsion. If a woman needed an escort from one place to another, a member of the **FRUIT OF ISLAM**, the all-male auxiliary of the NOI, would provide it. Children were raised under the watchful eye not only of mothers and fathers

but also community members and schoolteachers. In NOI schools, children were praised for their academic achievements and were taught to honor their heritage as Muslims and people of African descent. NOI leaders also constantly preached against the use of birth control, which they saw as an assault on the black family, though individual female members often chose to ignore such rules.

After W. D. MOHAMMED inherited the leadership of the NOI in 1975 following the death of his father, ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, he changed the religious tenor of the movement, aligning its theology with that of other SUNNI MUSLIM AMERICANS, but Mohammed did not alter the socially conservative emphasis on family values that his father had preached. To some extent, these socially conservative values were attractive to female members who joined in the 1970s, as *Engaged Surrender*, Carolyn Moxley Rouse's 2004 ethnography of African-American Muslim women in LOS ANGELES, revealed. Rouse showed that Muslim women who had joined the NOI partly because of its family values also rejected elements of the

NOI's teachings about the protection and perpetuation of the black family and the regulation of sexuality within marriage.

In the 1980s and 1990s, family continued to be a central marker of Muslim values in black Muslim communities. Whether part of W. D. Mohammed's community, SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICAN communities, or multiracial Sunni communities, many African-American Muslim families participated in family-oriented mosque activities. Together, they attended Sunday schools for supplemental religious education or sent their children to full-time Islamic schools. Those who chose not to attend a specific mosque often relied on family life as the central place for the teaching of religious values and for the practice of religious rituals.

Although the practice of polygamy was either rare or atypical among both immigrant and indigenous Muslims, scholars speculated that it was more common among African-American Muslims than among other Muslim-American ethnic groups. One explanation for the popularity of "man-sharing" among some African-American Muslim women



A Muslim-American family enjoys an afternoon at Flamingo Park in Miami, Florida. Because issues related to women's rights in Islam, including polygamy and divorce, have often dominated mainstream press coverage of Muslim families, the mundane, everyday realities of families, such as the one pictured here, have gone largely unnoticed. (Jeff Greenberg/Photo Edit)



was the relative dearth of black Muslim men—due partly to the high incarceration rates of young African-American males. Some women involved in plural marriage said that they enjoyed the sense of sisterhood that they had with their co-wives. Others reported that their husbands did not treat them all equally, as the Qur'an directed them to do. Another problem is that in the event of a breakup, an unmarried co-wife does not have rights to the husband's property, and the husband has few custody rights to any children.

Overall, African-American Muslim men and women are more likely to be serial monogamists than polygamists. According to Rouse, divorce rates and the number of children born out of wedlock in Los Angeles's black Sunni communities were significantly higher than the U.S. average. In response to what many have deemed to be social ills, African-American Muslim leaders such as SIRAJ WAHHAJ devoted countless sermons and lectures on the virtues of marriage and the importance of keeping marriages intact, but many women have claimed that such sermons reinforced patriarchal ideas that the man is the ultimate authority in family and other matters. One woman interviewed by Rouse complained about the idea that a husband has the right to know where his wife is at all times because he must have immediate sexual access to her. This woman noted that while her husband does not challenge her personal mobility or her employment outside the home, she knew about many husbands in her community who attempted to live by this rule—making it difficult for their wives to be employed.

Single-parent households, particularly those headed by mothers, have been more common in African-American Muslim communities than in other Muslim-American communities. African-American Muslim scholar AMINA WADUD has argued this matriarchal domestic model is just as Islamic as any other. Drawing on traditions from the Qur'an, Wadud has said that matriarchy has precedent in the Islamic figure of Hajar (Hagar), the single mother of Isma'il (Ishmael). Wadud points out that Hajar's sacrifice on behalf of her son is commemorated every year by Muslim pilgrims in Mecca. Contrary to many in the Muslim-American community, Wadud uses this Islamic precedent to defend the permissibility of the single-parent household.

#### IMMIGRANT MUSLIM FAMILIES

The earliest Muslim immigrants to the United States were predominantly unskilled and semiskilled Arab men who arrived in the 19th century in search of employment opportunities. Though they sometimes married non-Muslims, it was not uncommon for immigrants to return to their home countries for marriage and then bring their new brides to the United States. After more Muslim immigrant families became permanent residents and U.S. citizens in the early 20th century, this practice of returning home to find spouses became less prevalent. Muslim men from immigrant families were

encouraged to marry Muslim women from their own ethnic group, though by the 1950s this trend had become increasingly challenged by intermarriage. At the American Moslem Society in TOLEDO, OHIO, members of the local mosque welcomed the Christian spouses of their sons and daughters so long as the children would be raised Muslim. In many cases, the spouses converted to Islam. Muslim-American families largely strove to be like other American families.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, however, this desire to be like other Americans largely disappeared among religiously observant Muslim Americans as a reaction to the sexual revolution, a youth culture connected to drugs and rock and roll, and a general change in attitudes toward dress, profanity, and other markers of socially conservative values. A huge influx of Muslim immigrants from Africa and Asia arrived in the United States in this period and like other social conservatives sought to make the family a bulwark against the cultural changes of the time. Many immigrants viewed immoral behavior among Americans as typically Western behavior and redoubled their commitment to preserving their more conservative ethnic and religious traditions as an alternative. ASSIMILATION to these values was not seen as a worthy goal.

Although no unified Islamic culture developed among these first-generation immigrants and the values at stake for families varied significantly, the onus of preserving Muslim identity often fell on female members of the family. It was mostly the women of immigrant Muslim communities who had been responsible for perpetuating whatever was deemed as authentic culture through creating an Islamic home environment, preserving traditional domestic roles, maintaining traditional cuisine, and raising children with certain values. Although there were limits on both male and female teenage DATING, many immigrant families have been stricter with daughters than sons. Both sons and daughters have often been introduced to potential marriage partners, especially among SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, though there was often greater pressure on daughters to uphold the arranged or semiarranged marriage traditions. Mother and fathers sometimes relied on their daughters to marry other Muslims of similar ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds and perpetuate Muslim family values.

Although the primary wage earners of immigrant Muslim families were mostly men, the early immigrant families realized the employment opportunities and wage-earning potential of women. Among the earliest immigrants, women's employment took place primarily to supplement the head of household's income and revealed to others a family's lower economic status. Later immigrants and women of subsequent generations worked for several reasons, including women's educational and professional goals, consumerism, or need. According to some researchers, this pattern did not alleviate domestic responsibilities for women and in many cases





A mother and daughter enjoy a carousel ride at the Arab International Festival in Dearborn, Michigan. (Jim West/Photolibrary)

challenged the traditional notion of the father as patriarch and provider for his children and maintainer of his wife.

Muslim-American immigrant families have often included relations beyond the nuclear family. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins may live with a married couple and their children or may take the place of an absent spouse in order to care for children. All share the family environment and intimate space in which children are meant to respect all the elders of the home.

The concept of a South Asian or Middle Eastern joint family is a traditional one in which married sons live in the same home with their parents and respective wives and children. Some sons may move out given limited space for their families or employment opportunities in a different city. However, at least one son lives with the parents, while daughters move into the homes of their husbands after marriage or with their in-laws in the case of joint family situations. In this arrangement, the parents remain the heads of household, often despite retirement, and

there is severe pressure on women who enter into close quarters with their in-laws. In an American context, this living arrangement among Middle Eastern and South Asian families has been less common but often has been a source of familial tension between in-laws who have poor rapport. Women who wish to live in their own homes and make autonomous decisions about their employment, how to manage their money, and how to raise their children are put in a difficult situation.

### CONCLUSION

Because of the Muslim-American community's diversity and long history, there is no single ideal or typical Muslim-American family. Indeed, in addition to the African-American and immigrant families profiled above, the history of Muslim-American families includes the stories of interracial families, interethnic families, and interreligious families (which often include one Muslim and one non-Muslim parent). There are also polygamous Muslim-American families and Muslim-American families headed by same-sex couples. These families do not necessarily share the same values or customs, though many of them agree that the family is an institution worth nurturing and one that is a vital institution to the perpetuation of Islamic faith.

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**Fard, W. D. (Fard Mohammed)** (ca. 1877–ca. 1934)  
*founder of the Nation of Islam*

W. D. Fard founded the NATION OF ISLAM's first mosque in DETROIT in 1930. This mosque, originally called the Temple of Islam, eventually became Temple No. 1 of the Nation of Islam. Also known as Wallace Fard or Fard Mohammed, he preached a distinctive message of black American identity and destiny until his mysterious disappearance in 1934. One of his followers was ELIJAH MUHAMMAD. After Fard vanished, Muhammad became his successor, claiming that Fard was the Mahdi, or prophesied redeemer of Islam, and he even taught that Fard was God. Though little remains certain about the biography of this enigmatic figure, Fard played a profound role in Muslim-American and U.S. history more generally.

### CONTESTED IDENTITY

Fard's identity is shrouded in mystery. He appeared in Detroit in 1930, working as both a peddler and a missionary among the city's poor black population. During that time and since his disappearance in 1934, multiple and contradictory stories have circulated about Fard's origins and identity. Some of his early followers believed that Fard was a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Others traced his lineage to the kings of Hejaz—located in the region of Arabia that is home to Mecca and Medina; they claimed that Fard had abandoned a diplomatic career with the kingdom of Hejaz to preach a message of salvation to black Americans. Some members of the Nation of Islam described Fard either as a black Jamaican whose father was a Syrian Muslim or as a Palestinian. According to the group's official teachings, Fard was born on February 26, 1877, in Mecca. Nation of Islam members believe that Fard was a member of the family of "the original black man" and that his coming was foretold in the Bible. Other Nation of Islam teachings suggest that Fard was born of mixed black and white racial heritage.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) began an extensive investigation of Fard and the Nation of Islam in the early 1940s. The findings of this investigation, however, are far from conclusive. According to FBI reports, Fard may have been born in New Zealand in 1894 or in Mecca in 1873, 1877, or 1900. Fard's race is listed alternately as white and black in these documents, and more than 50 different aliases are associated with him.

Despite the many discrepancies within the FBI's reports, the agency's primary account of Fard's background suggests he came to the United States from New Zealand in 1913 as Wallace Dodd Ford. He settled in Portland, Oregon, where he entered a common-law marriage with Pearl Allen and fathered a son. Dodd abandoned his family and moved first to Seattle, Washington, and then to LOS ANGELES, California. In Los Angeles, he entered a second common-law marriage to Hazel Barton and fathered another son. The FBI files



According to the FBI, this picture of W. D. Fard, the founder of the Nation of Islam, was taken on May 26, 1933, in Detroit. By 1934, Fard had disappeared from Detroit, and Elijah Muhammad had claimed leadership of the movement. (AP Photo)

detail Ford's arrests for assault with a deadly weapon, possession and sale of bootleg alcohol, and sale of narcotics during this period.

Ford received a three-year prison sentence in San Quentin Federal Penitentiary in California for his crimes. After his release from prison in 1929, Ford traveled to CHICAGO then to Detroit as a silk peddler. He may have been involved with the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America in Chicago. After its founder, NOBLE DREW ALI, was arrested for the murder of Claude Greene in 1929, he appointed a follower named Ford-El to lead the religious group's main temple in Chicago. Some sources indicate that Ford-El moved to Detroit under the name of Wallace D. Fard and established his own ministry there.

In Detroit, FBI reports indicate that Fard was arrested several times for his controversial preaching. He was jailed in 1932 in connection with the Nation of Islam's alleged sacrificial murders. Fard was forced to leave Detroit in May 1933.

He traveled to Chicago and was imprisoned briefly there. Fard then secretly returned to Detroit only to disappear mysteriously in 1934. Some sources suggest he assumed a new identity and fled Detroit, while others suggest he was murdered by either the Detroit police or his protégé Elijah Muhammad. The Nation of Islam teaches that Fard traveled to Mecca to prepare for his eventual return. The FBI continued to investigate Fard until the 1960s, and the agency's findings suggest Fard may have returned to New Zealand. In the 1980s, Z. I. Ansari, a Pakistani scholar, claimed Fard was Muhammad Abdullah, a Pakistani Muslim who had served as an adviser to Elijah Muhammad and tutor to his son and successor, W. D. MOHAMMED, before becoming imam of a mosque in Oakland, California. Abdullah, however, denied that he was Fard.

### TEACHINGS

Fard began his ministry in Detroit by warning people to abandon their vices. He instructed them about the physical and moral dangers of alcohol and tobacco consumption, dancing, and adultery. Fard also encouraged his followers to work hard, conduct themselves with dignity, and honor their families. In addition to his advice about physical health and spiritual development, Fard preached to black men and women of Detroit that Christianity was not their true religion. He denied racial labels like "black" and "Negro," insisting that his followers should recognize themselves as "Asiatics." Citing the book of Revelation, Fard claimed that Armageddon was imminent and that this apocalyptic war would be the final conflict between the white and black races. Fard insisted that the only hope for black men and women was to convert to their natural religion of Islam and to reclaim their true identity as Muslims. According to his theology, blacks and whites were not created by the same God and had fundamentally different natures. He taught that black people were righteous, while white people were wicked. Such ideas about racial supremacy within the Nation of Islam can be understood as a reaction to the widespread interest in Nordic racial mythology and eugenics during the 1920s and 1930s. Fard's teachings encouraged racial separation and helped his followers counter the discrimination they experienced within the broader American society.

### SIGNIFICANCE

Attempting to make definitive statements about this mythic figure poses major challenges. Despite researching Fard's life for over two decades, the FBI remained puzzled by his life, career, and disappearance. So much of what was written and said about Fard was recorded long after he left Detroit in 1934. It is particularly daunting to separate Fard's words from what Elijah Muhammad later said about him. Some scholars, such as Muhammad's biographer Claude Clegg, have attributed many of Muhammad's teachings to Fard, while others, such as Edward Curtis, have asserted that Muhammad made signifi-

cant changes and additions to Fard's original teachings. There are few contemporaneous accounts of Fard's life, and one of the few academic studies of Fard's Nation of Islam based on primary sources appeared two years after Fard had left Detroit.

In the end, the search for the historical Fard may be less important than understanding the mythic truth that later followers attributed to him. While the FBI claimed he was an ex-convict merely hustling to make a living through religious chicanery, his followers in the 1930s thought him to be a divine savior sent to lead them out of the wilderness of North America into the Nation of Islam. By the 1940s, it was clear that many believed him to be God-in-the-flesh, an earthly incarnation of God's promise not to abandon his people.

Tammy Heise

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### FBI File on W. D. Fard (1963)

*From the 1920s until today, the FBI has conducted surveillance and gathered intelligence on various African-American Muslim groups and individuals, considering them to be politically dangerous. No group has attracted more attention from the FBI than the Nation of Islam (NOI). The FBI's declassified file on NOI founder W. D. Fard is 816 pages long, while the file on leader Elijah Muhammad (born Elijah Poole) is 2,885 pages long. In the 1970s, congressional and independent investigators discovered that the FBI had also conducted counterintelligence operations against a host of domestic political and religious groups, including the NOI, during the administrations of Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. The FBI planted agents inside the organization to spread disinformation and pit various leaders against one another, hoping that the NOI would implode or soften its criticism of the United States. The excerpt below from W. D. Fard's FBI file recounts what the FBI believed it knew about the identity of the mysterious leader by 1963. But scholars continue to debate nearly every aspect of this man's life. The facts are difficult to obtain since they are entangled in multiple webs of deception—or, put more gently, multiple versions of events. FBI informants who provided the bureau with information did not necessarily tell the truth, and*



*movement members, all of whom knew they were being watched, also fed the FBI misleading information. Some recent scholars of the NOI have suggested that the search for the historical Fard obscures the more important fact that he established one of the most successful Muslim-American movements in history—and that thousands believed in a mythic truth that the very man whom the FBI called a liar and a thief was God in the flesh.*



### Background Information on Wallace Dodd

Dodd, under the name Wallace D. Fard, is the founder of the Black Muslim sect (“Lost-Found Nation of Islam in North America”) and is considered by members of the sect the embodiment of God, the Messiah, etc. Elijah Muhammad (Elijah Poole) is his chief apostle and prophet.

Wallace Dodd was born in New Zealand February 26, 1891. His father was British, his mother Polynesian.

His FBI identification number is 56062.

California Bureau of Identification and Investigation lists him as Wallace Ford, #1797924.

At San Quentin his [he (mistake is in the original)] was listed as Ford, #42314.

Michigan State Police list him as Wallace Farad, #98076.

Los Angeles Police list him as Wallie D. Ford (arrested for bootlegging Jan 20, 1926).

All of the above carry the same finger prints—in all cases he is listed as Caucasian.

On the birth certificate of his illegitimate son, Wallace Dodd is listed as white. His common law wife, also listed as white, was named Hazel Barton. This certificate, filled out September 2, 1930, was filed with the California State Board of Health September 2, 1930.

(Son named Wallace Dodd—his mother had it changed to Wallace D. Ford). (The son is said to have drowned while serving in the Coast Guard in 1942; this would not check out, however, as he would only be 12 years old.)

Dodd arrived in the United States from New Zealand in 1913, settled briefly in Portland, Oregon. He married but abandoned his wife and infant son. He lingered in the Seattle area as Fred Dodd for a few months, then moved to Los Angeles and opened a restaurant at 803 W. Third Street as Wallace D. Ford. He was arrested for bootlegging January, 1926; served a brief jail

sentence (also as Wallace D. Ford)—identified on record as white. On June 12, 1926, also as Ford, was sentenced to San Quentin for sale of narcotics at his restaurant; got 6-months to 6-years sentence—released from San Quentin May 27, 1929. Prison record lists him as Caucasian.

After release, went to Chicago, then to Detroit as a silk peddler. His customers were mostly Negro and he himself posed as a Negro. He prided himself as a biblical authority and mathematician.

When Elijah Muhammad (Poole) met him, he was passing himself off as a savior and claiming that he was born in Mecca and had arrived in the U.S. on July 4, 1930.

In 1933 there was a scandal revolving about the sect involving a “human sacrifice” which may or may not have been trumped up. At any rate, the leader was arrested May 25, 1933, under the name Fard with 8 other listed aliases (W.D. Farrad, Wallace Farad, Wali Farrad, Prof. Ford, etc.). The official report says Dodd admitted that his teachings were “strictly a racket” and he was “getting all the money out of it he could.” He was ordered out of Detroit.

A newspaper article which appeared in the *San Francisco Examiner* and the *Los Angeles Examiner* on July 28, 1963, reporter Ed Montgomery (of San Francisco) claimed to have contacted Dodd’s former common law wife—Hazel Dodd or Hazel Ford. According to this account, Dodd went to Chicago after leaving Detroit and became a traveling suit salesman for a mail order tailor. In this position he worked himself across the Midwest and ultimately arrived in Los Angeles in the spring of 1934 in a new car and wearing flowing white robes. He tried to work out a reconciliation with the woman, but she would not agree to one. (Incidentally [sic], she said he had sent her considerable amounts of money from time to time.) He stayed in Los Angeles for two weeks, frequently visiting his son. Then he sold his car and boarded a ship bound for New Zealand where he said he would visit relatives.



Source: “Wallace D. Fard.” Memorandum 100-43165, Federal Bureau of Investigation Electronic Reading Room, Part 1. Available online. URL: <http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/fard.htm>. Accessed January 22, 2009.



**Farrakhan, Louis** (Louis Eugene Walcott, Abdul Haleem Farrakhan) (1933– ) *religious and political leader*

Powerful orator, talented musician, and controversial religious leader Louis Farrakhan, who converted to the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) in the middle 1950s, was a pivotal figure in 20th-century U.S. history. Popular among many African Americans, Farrakhan has been called a “prophet of rage” and anti-Semite by his critics. Beyond his entanglement in racial and ethnic debates, Farrakhan was also a key figure in the unfolding of 20th-century Muslim-American history. After W. D. MOHAMMED transformed the original Nation of Islam into the WORLD COMMUNITY OF AL-ISLAM IN THE WEST in 1976, Farrakhan split with him and reorganized his own version of the NOI in 1978. As NOI leader for more than three decades, he went on to organize the MILLION MAN MARCH in 1995 and the Million Family March in 2000. In the 21st century, he focused on encouraging interfaith and interracial dialogue.

#### EARLY LIFE

Louis Farrakhan was born Louis Eugene Walcott on May 11, 1933, in the Bronx, a borough of NEW YORK CITY, and he moved to BOSTON at a young age. He was the son of West Indian immigrants. His mother, Sarah Mae Manning, had emigrated from Saint Kitts and Nevis; his biological father, Percival Clarke, whom Farrakhan never knew, was Jamaican; and his stepfather, Louis Walcott, was from Barbados. At the age of five Farrakhan received music training and began playing the violin. He was a talented musician and toured with the Boston College Orchestra when he was just 12 years old. He also won a number of music competitions and was invited to play on national radio. Because of his musical talents, he appeared on the *Ted Mack's Original Amateur Hour* in the late 1940s.

In his youth, Farrakhan was also an active member of Rev. Nathan Wright's Cyprian's Episcopal Church, a church in which black politics was combined with black religion. He attended Boston English High School, and from 1951 to 1953, he was a student at the Winston-Salem Teachers College. In 1953, he left school, moved back to Boston, and married Betsy Ross, who eventually became Khadijah Farrakhan. Together, the couple had nine children.

In early 1950s Boston, while Farrakhan was working as a violinist and calypso singer, he was first exposed to the NOI. A friend told him that NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD was in Boston and invited Farrakhan to hear him speak. At the time, Farrakhan has said, he chose not to go because he believed that Muhammad's teachings spread racial hatred. In 1955, the same friend invited him to attend the NOI's annual SAVIOUR'S DAY convention, which celebrates the birth of NOI founder W. D. FARD.



Louis Farrakhan gave up the violin and a promising career as a singer to join the Nation of Islam (NOI) in the 1950s. By the 1990s, Farrakhan, who established a new version of the NOI in 1978, had resumed playing the violin, performing a Mendelssohn violin concerto in New York City in 1993. (*newscom*)

Farrakhan attended this gathering, and, after hearing Muhammad speak, he was moved to join the NOI. He took the name Louis X, following the practice of other NOI members who chose to give up their “slave names.” Muhammad later gave him the name Abdul Haleem Farrakhan. Farrakhan's decision to give up his music career was not easy. At the time, the NOI did not support African Americans working as entertainers. Muhammad believed that blacks had spent too long degrading themselves in order to entertain whites, and so MALCOLM X (1925–65), one of the rising figures in the NOI, required that he either give up his music career or leave his mosque. According to Farrakhan, when faced with the decision between his career and the NOI, he had a vision. In the vision, he saw two doors, one of which was labeled “success” and the other “Islam.” Behind the first door were gold, diamonds, and other unimaginable worldly riches, but he nonetheless chose the door labeled “Islam,” which was covered by a simple black cloth.

After deciding to end his secular music career, Farrakhan nonetheless continued to write songs, including a number inspired by his religious convictions. His two most famous songs, recorded by 1960, were “White Man’s Heaven Is Black Man’s Hell” and “Look at My Chains.” In addition to his musical talents, Farrakhan also wrote and directed two plays, *Orgena, A Negro Spelled Backwards*, which was about slavery and how African Americans were oppressed in the United States, and *The Trial*, in which performers enact the trial and execution of the white devil.

### RISE IN THE NATION OF ISLAM

After joining the Nation of Islam, Farrakhan began working in Harlem’s Temple No. 7 under Malcolm X, where his talent for public speaking was almost immediately recognized. As a result, he was assigned to assist Malcolm X. During this time, he also served as a lieutenant in the FRUIT OF ISLAM, an all-male auxiliary of the NOI that protected members of the organization.

Farrakhan quickly rose through the ranks. In 1958, he was appointed head minister to Boston Temple No. 11, and in 1964, he was made head minister of Harlem Temple No. 7, the year in which Malcolm X left the NOI. In 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated and three men with ties to the NOI were charged with his death. Although Farrakhan was never charged in connection with his killing, many, including Malcolm X’s family, believed that he was in some way responsible for it. This led to years of animosity between Farrakhan and Malcolm X’s family, and in 1994, Malcolm X’s daughter, Qubilah Shabazz, was charged with hiring a hit man to assassinate Farrakhan. These charges were dropped. A year later, Farrakhan and Malcolm X’s family reconciled, after he privately apologized to his widow, Betty Shabazz. In a 2000 interview on the CBS television news show *60 Minutes*, Farrakhan apologized to one of Malcolm X’s daughters, Atallah Shabazz, for contributing to his murder. He said he regretted that his words may have created an atmosphere that led to his assassination, although Farrakhan went on to deny that this apology in any way meant that he himself was directly involved in Malcolm X’s murder.

In 1967, Farrakhan became the National Representative of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, the same position that Malcolm X had once held. In 1972, a confrontation between New York City police and members of Farrakhan’s mosque led to rioting in Harlem. In the midst of the riot, Farrakhan stood on top of a car and calmed the rioters, gaining him national attention and popularity. In 1974, his Black Family Day lecture in New York City drew a crowd of thousands.

### FORMING A NEW NATION

On February 25, 1975, Elijah Muhammad died and his son, W. D. Mohammed, took over his father’s position as supreme minister of the Nation of Islam. Farrakhan, although disap-

pointed that he did not become Muhammad’s successor, did not immediately leave the organization and remained a member of Mohammed’s group until 1977. In public, Farrakhan said that Mohammed’s assumption of his father’s mantle of leadership was the will of God. Farrakhan pledged his loyalty to the new leader.

According to Farrakhan, however, Mohammed demoted him from his highly respected position of head minister in Harlem to a lower-level position in a small Chicago temple. Farrakhan interpreted this move as an attempt by NOI leaders to keep him out of the public eye, to distance him from the black nationalist community in Harlem, and to keep a close eye on him to control his behavior. He also rejected Mohammed’s attempts to bring the teachings of the NOI in line with other Sunni Muslims, who rejected the NOI as heretical and un-Islamic.

As a result, on November 8, 1977, Farrakhan broke with Mohammed’s organization, which had since been renamed the World Community of al-Islam in the West (WCIW). In 1978, Farrakhan formed his own group, which he called the Nation of Islam. After traveling to Africa and the Caribbean, Farrakhan said, he believed that people of African descent were always oppressed in multiracial societies, even in Muslim nations. As a result, he could not support Mohammed’s move toward Sunni Islam. He wanted to maintain the NOI’s strong emphasis on black liberation, and he felt that Mohammed’s new teachings did not address the needs of the black community.

In forming his new organization, Farrakhan did not inherit the dozens of mosques and businesses associated with Elijah Muhammad’s NOI. There is no authoritative study on the matter, but anecdotal evidence suggests that most religious leaders and followers in Muhammad’s NOI also remained loyal to W. D. Mohammed’s WCIW. Still, Farrakhan claimed to be Muhammad’s rightful heir.

Indeed, Farrakhan, like Mohammed, did have kinship ties to Elijah Muhammad. In 1975, Louis Farrakhan’s daughter Donna had married Muhammad’s grandson, Kamel Muhammad, while his daughter Maria married Muhammad’s nephew, Wali Muhammad. Later, in 1990, another of Farrakhan’s daughters, Hana, married Muhammad’s son, Kamal. Farrakhan regularly pointed out his familial ties to the late Elijah Muhammad in legitimating his claims to leadership. In addition, Farrakhan claimed to be the spiritual son of Elijah Muhammad. Farrakhan never knew his biological father and claimed that he was without any father until he met Elijah Muhammad.

### CONTROVERSY IN THE 1980s

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, Farrakhan’s extraordinary organizational and rhetorical skills had resulted in the successful reconstruction of the NOI. Farrakhan convinced several former NOI officials to join him and attracted new

members to his organization. But in the public's eye, he was beset by controversy.

In the 1980s, Farrakhan and several prominent Jewish-American leaders came to rhetorical blows over the controversy surrounding Jesse Jackson's 1984 presidential campaign. Farrakhan's defense of Jackson against charges of anti-Semitism led to his branding by Anti-Defamation League official Nathan Pearlmuter as the "Black Hitler." Farrakhan's response was that Adolf Hitler was "a very great man," though he "wasn't great for me as a Black man" and he had acted with "evil toward the Jewish people." The speech was condemned across the United States and officially censured by the U.S. Senate.

Farrakhan also bred controversy for some of his religious views. On September 17, 1985, he experienced a vision that, he maintained, further validated his position as rightful leader of the Nation of Islam. He was said to have been in Mexico at the time of the vision and in it he saw himself climb to an ancient temple at the top of a mountain. There a UFO approached him, brought him on board, and took him to the Mother Wheel. According to NOI cosmology, God resides in the Mother Wheel, a human-made planet, and occasionally sends out smaller vessels, like the one that visited Farrakhan, to interact with humanity. Once arriving at the Mother Wheel, Farrakhan entered a room that had nothing in it except a speaker from which he heard Elijah Muhammad's voice. Muhammad told Farrakhan that he was alive and had been removed from Earth by God to protect him. Farrakhan also claimed that Muhammad confirmed that he was the rightful leader of the Nation of Islam and proceeded to provide him with secret knowledge. He placed a scroll of divine information in Farrakhan's head and told him that in time he would reveal everything that was on the scroll to Farrakhan so that he could properly lead his followers.

After his vision of the encounter with the Mother Wheel, rather than being returned to Mexico, Farrakhan maintained that he was taken to WASHINGTON, D.C., where he delivered a warning to the government. This vision supported the commonly held view that Elijah Muhammad was alive and would one day return in a final battle between good and evil, but it also reaffirmed that Farrakhan was the rightful leader of the Nation of Islam. Not only was he told by Muhammad that he was to lead the faithful, but by placing a scroll inside his head, Muhammad made Farrakhan a divine messenger and, therefore, he was in a unique position to lead the NOI.

#### FARRAKHAN'S SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

In 1981, Farrakhan held the first national convention of the reorganized Nation of Islam. At this meeting the NOI elevated Elijah Muhammad, who had been considered a prophet, to messiah. NOI members began celebrating two Saviour's Days. The birth of Elijah Muhammad is celebrated on October 7, and the birth of W. D. Fard is remembered on February 26.

In 1979, Farrakhan began the newspaper *Final Call*. At first the paper was a small operation. Farrakhan mortgaged his home to start it, and it was originally produced in his basement. In 1983, the NOI began publishing the paper once a month, whereas before it was printed irregularly. By the late 1980s, it had become a biweekly publication. Rather than printing articles only by members or about the Nation of Islam, the *Final Call* also printed articles on general issues relating to African-American life, often written by authors unaffiliated with the NOI. This promoted wide circulation far beyond members of the religious group.

By the mid-1980s, there were NOI temples in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Farrakhan also worked to expand the NOI to other countries, and under his leadership, branches were established in Ghana, London, Paris, and the Caribbean. He also began actively cultivating relationships with Muslim nations.

Farrakhan reintroduced many of the entrepreneurial undertakings that Elijah Muhammad had begun. He hoped to encourage African-American business development and to nurture a black economy independent of the white-dominated market. Under Farrakhan, the NOI started restaurants, bakeries, clothing lines, clothing stores, grocery stores, a security agency, and a skin and hair-care line in addition to other endeavors. In 1985, the NOI also introduced the People Organized and Working for Economical Rebirth (POWER) program. Its goal was to encourage the integration of African-American businesses to coordinate manufacturing, distribution, and sales. That same year, Libya also gave the NOI a \$5 million loan for the POWER program. Although the program had some initial success, it never gained the widespread support that Farrakhan had envisioned.

On February 26, 1989, Farrakhan dedicated the NOI's new national center in Chicago. He purchased the building, formerly known as the Stoney Island mosque, from W. D. Mohammed's group. He named the center Mosque Maryam in honor of black women. He also purchased Elijah Muhammad's former home, "The Place," on the South Side.

In 1995, Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam organized the Million Man March in Washington, D.C. This event was meant to promote family values, and anywhere from 400,000 to 1.1 million, mostly African-American men, attended. Farrakhan spoke at the end of the event, calling it a day of atonement and reconciliation. He challenged black men to improve themselves and focus on their families, and he expressed his hope that by remembering America's racist past, the country could begin to heal.

In January 1996, Farrakhan embarked on his "World Friendship Tour." During his 27-day trip, he traveled to 23 countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, including Iran, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Sudan, and Korea. While touring, he visited a number of countries that, according to the U.S.



government, supported terrorism, and he met with many controversial world leaders. Though Farrakhan insisted that his tour was meant to unite the world's Muslims and help liberate the oppressed, he was severely criticized for visiting what were considered to be nations hostile to the United States and engaging in dialogue with their leaders.

In the 1990s, Farrakhan also began encouraging interfaith and interracial dialogue and started developing relationships with other American racial and religious minorities. In addition to the NOI's Million Man March, which sought to reach out to African-American men of all faiths, Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam also sponsored the Million Family March in 2000. This was a more explicitly interfaith gathering cosponsored by the Unification Church's Family Federation for World Peace and Unification.

One of the expressed goals of the Million Family March was to foster racial and religious harmony, and men and women of a variety of racial and religious backgrounds were invited. Farrakhan was the main speaker at the event and expressed his hope that America could become an accepting, multicultural society. In 2007, Farrakhan also delivered a highly publicized speech in DETROIT in which he called for dialogue between people of different races, religions, and cultures; in October 2008, he invited leaders of all races and religions to attend the rededication of Mosque Maryam in Chicago, where he spoke again of the importance of interfaith discourse.

In 2000, Farrakhan and W. D. Mohammed also recognized each other as Muslims for the first time. Mohammed had sharply criticized Farrakhan when he first left his group in 1978, saying that Farrakhan's rejection of Sunni Islam was also a rejection of the original intent of both NOI founder W. D. Fard and his father, Elijah Muhammad. He also criticized Farrakhan, saying that he preached racism, which went against the tenets of Islam. There were even rumors that these two factions were planning war against each other, although this never came to pass. Beginning in 1983, Mohammed and Farrakhan started meeting secretly. During these interactions the two agreed to accept their differences and vowed not to attack the other physically or verbally.

Under Farrakhan, the NOI also developed social outreach and offered a number of social services. The organization opened a health clinic in Washington, D.C., specifically for HIV/AIDS patients and actively worked to force drug dealers out of the city. It also developed programs intended to help gang members in LOS ANGELES.

At the turn of the 21st century, there were an estimated 10,000 to 50,000 active members of the NOI, but when Farrakhan spoke, he regularly drew crowds of 30,000. Many non-Muslims went to hear the charismatic Farrakhan, whose message of black pride resonated with many African Americans, regardless of their religious affiliation.

## FARRAKHAN'S HEALTH AND LEGACY

In 1991, Farrakhan was diagnosed with prostate cancer. For three years he chose not to receive medical treatment; instead he changed his diet, exercised, and prayed. His condition worsened, however, and in 1994, he had a radiation seed implanted. The seed effectively treated the cancer, but it also caused an ulcer, which required Farrakhan to undergo surgery in 1999. In May 2003, he founded the Louis Farrakhan Prostate Cancer Foundation, which educates men about prostate cancer and encourages them to be tested. It also helped men with insufficient or no health insurance to pay for screening and treatment.

Louis Farrakhan has been both a religious and a political leader in America. His stances on race relations and international affairs, although often controversial, have gained him national attention. His move away from racial controversy toward religious pluralism in the 21st century has allowed him to remain relevant in a society that has placed increasing emphasis on multiculturalism.

Monica C. Reed

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## Black Books Bulletin Interviews Minister Abdul Farrakhan (1978)

*Minister Louis Farrakhan (1933– ), Elijah Muhammad's chief spokesman after Malcolm X, broke away from the original Nation of Islam (renamed the World Community of al-Islam in the West [WCIW]) in 1977. He disagreed with changes made by Elijah Muhammad's son, W. D. Mohammed, who abandoned the teachings that contradicted basic Sunni Islamic doctrines. In this 1978 interview, granted to Black Books Bulletin, Farrakhan explained why he had decided to reestablish a version of the Nation of Islam based on the original teachings of Elijah Muhammad. The interviewer's questions about threats to Minister Farrakhan's life reflected tensions among the followers of Farrakhan and Mohammed at the time. But neither Farrakhan nor Mohammed suffered any violence at the hands of his rival's followers, and by the 1980s they had signaled their acceptance of each other, if not of each other's views.*





Q: Now you have been ex-communicated from the World Community of Islam in the West. For our readers, how did this come about?

FARRAKHAN: The effects of the changes within the World Community of Islam, in addition to the information I gained about our people in my travels abroad, caused me to reassess the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, his teaching and program for Black people. My articulation of this caused Imam W.D. Muhammad [Mohammed] to announce to the entire Muslim body that I was no longer a person with whom the Muslims (WCIW) should associate, listen to, or even be given the Muslim greeting. I naturally took this to mean that I was ex-communicated from the World Community of Islam.

Q: You stated at one point that there were external similarities but internal differences in the way that you, as opposed to Malcolm, separated from the Nation of Islam. Can you elaborate on this?

FARRAKHAN: Yes. Malcolm as you know was Elijah Muhammad's national representative and spokesman. He was articulate, popular, and his popularity created jealousy and envy among some of the top officials within the movement which resulted in severe problems for him. More importantly, Malcolm saw in the Honorable Elijah Muhammad what from his perspective were serious contradictions and Malcolm left the Nation or was put out. These are the external similarities between Malcolm and me. Malcolm, in his anger and bitterness, however, made what in my judgment was a tragic mistake which was to sling mud at his former teacher. This lit the fuse in the highly incendiary atmosphere creating the conditions which allowed Malcolm to be assassinated.

I am not bitter [at] W.D. Muhammad or the members of the WCIW. In my return to the message and program of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, and Malcolm going completely away from his teaching and program, lies in the internal differences between us.

Q: Askia Muhammad, the former editor of *Muhammad Speaks*, now the *Bilalian News*, commented that "Wallace Muhammad has Americanized the Muslim movement in this country; installing the American flag on the pulpit in

Chicago Headquarters Mosque to make us think that we owe more to white America than white America owes to us." What do you think motivates this new conciliatory tone on the part of the World Community of Islam in the West leadership?

FARRAKHAN: Motivation is very difficult to judge. The position that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad stood upon . . . is that America has not been the friend of Black people and is not now doing justice by Black people. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad took the position that America was spiritually and morally more wicked in her enslavement of the Blackman than Egypt was with Israel. All of these wicked cities, nations or empires coming together to form a magnificent prophetic picture of America in particular and the world in general.

In light of this, I cannot understand how any Muslim or right thinking person could love or be conciliatory toward American life when this world's life is diametrically opposed to Quranic life and the life taught by the Prophets which is the life of justice and truth.

Q: Will your propagation of the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad take any immediate organizational form? If so, will Islam be an integral part of that form?

FARRAKHAN: The Honorable Elijah Muhammad viewed all Black people in America as Muslims. He said some knew that they were Muslims and some did not know. If we study this program carefully, as it appeared for about thirteen or fourteen years on the back page of *Muhammad Speaks*, we find that it wasn't just a program for Muslims, it was a program for Black people. When he said we want freedom—a full and complete freedom, we want justice—equal justice under the law, and we want justice applied equally to all regardless of creed, or class, or color, he was talking in one sense within the framework of the United States, but he was also referring to our setting up a nation of our own. That nation would include Black people of every kind of thought, of every kind of persuasion. So, if the law is applied equally to all, regardless of class, creed, or color he's admitting that there will be different creeds, as part of the nation. But what we have as a central idea is the idea of the development of Black people, economically, socially, morally, intellectually, spiritually, and scientifically, to be able to compete as an

entity with all of the nations of the earth. I believe that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad's program is wide enough, broad enough, and strong enough for every Black man, woman, and child to stand on its base without feeling threatened in the least in their own ideological development.

Q: You stated in an earlier interview with Carlos Russell that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad was given the key to our problems here and throughout the world. One of the essential elements in his program was the acquisition and development of land. What role should land play now in the solution to the problems of Black people, specifically here in America?

FARRAKHAN: Land is needed now even more so than in 1959 and 60, when the Honorable Elijah Muhammad was calling for it. The economic picture in America is exceedingly dark and there is no promise that the United States Government through the watered-down version of the Humphrey-Hawkins legislation [a measure passed by Congress to stimulate employment] is going to be able to satisfy the employment needs of white people much less our people. We see a growing Black population in America, but we see an obsolescence of Black people in America. We have millions of Black people in this country now who are not needed, who are not performing any vital function to keep America alive and growing. Now white America sees Black people as a burden on the economy, a strain on the country. The cities are a burden to the government and the condition of Black people in the cities increases that burden. And, with the increase in drugs, crime and joblessness, our people are in a very vulnerable position now that they cannot be allowed to continue in. So the wise, wicked scientists of evil in this country, I'm sure, are thinking of skillful and scientific ways to eliminate their burden, the Black population. And so it seems to me it is more important now that we form a united Black front to call for land which would be the basis of developing an economy. That puts the responsibility of self-development on our own shoulders, so that we will never again be looked upon as a burden to anyone.

Q: Finally, Minister Farrakhan, there are those who fear for your life, based on the way things have developed. Can you relate your feelings on this?

FARRAKHAN: Yes brother, death is everywhere, but so is the power of Allah. I tell you truthfully, I don't fear one atom's weight for my life because I believe that as sure as we sit in this room together by the grace of God I will be alive to continue the work of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and to continue the work of uplifting Black people regardless of the enemies that may seek to take my life.



Source: "Black Books Bulletin Interviews Minister Abdul Farrakhan." *Black Books Bulletin* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1978): 44, 71.

### **al-Faruqi, Isma'il (1921–1986) *Palestinian-American scholar and activist***

From 1968 to 1986, Isma'il al-Faruqi was one of the pioneering scholars of Islamic studies in the United States and, more specifically, the American Academy of Religion, the largest professional organization of religious studies scholars in the world. After serving as the last Palestinian governor of the Galilee region before it became part of Israel, he built a distinguished career as an academic and activist in North America until his murder in 1986.

Al-Faruqi was born in Jaffa, Palestine, on January 21, 1921. His father was a judge in an Islamic court and managed his son's early religious education. After attending the French-Catholic Collège des Frères, al-Faruqi earned a bachelor's degree from the American University in Beirut in 1941. He became governor of Galilee in 1945, only to lose the position three years later with the creation of an Israeli state in Palestine. He fled to Lebanon and then the United States, where he received a Ph.D. in Western philosophy from Indiana University. He completed his dissertation, "On Justifying the Good: Metaphysics of Epistemology and Value," in 1952.

Despite his interest in Western civilization, al-Faruqi maintained a passion for Islamic studies. He relocated to Cairo's al-Azhar University in 1954 in order to immerse himself in Muslim scholarship and culture. When he returned to North America four years later to join the faculty at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, his work focused mainly on pan-Arabism and on the establishment of a "trialogue" between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In 1967, he published *Christian Ethics*, an analysis of Christian thought within the Abrahamic tradition. He accepted a teaching position at Temple University in Philadelphia the following year.

Whereas Islam had previously been the focus of area studies at Temple, al-Faruqi recast it as one of the core subjects of the Department of Religion. At a time when

NATION OF ISLAM membership was growing and Asian and African Muslims were immigrating to the United States in ever greater numbers, he convinced the Temple University officials to invest more heavily in Islamic studies and to recruit more Muslim students. He also helped found the ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS OF NORTH AMERICA in 1972, the Islamic Studies Steering Committee of the American Academy of Religion in 1976, the AMERICAN ISLAMIC COLLEGE in 1982, and was a leading member of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION.

Al-Faruqi was influenced by the strain of Wahhabi Islamic thought that sought to purify Islam of what were considered to be impermissible innovations, changes to the religion that contradicted the original intent of the QUR'AN and Sunna, or "traditions," of the prophet Muhammad. In 1980, he published English translations of three of 'Abd al-Wahhab's treatises on *tawhid*, or the "oneness of God." Al-Faruqi argued that because all aspects of life were the product of *tawhid*, Islam should be seen as a dynamic faith that could be used to solve modern problems, from economic inequality to moral decay. This belief informed his view of America as a potential vehicle for Islamic revival. "Nothing could be greater," he wrote, "than this youthful, vigorous, and rich continent turning away from its past evil and marching forward under the banner of Allahu Akbar! [God is greatest!]" He criticized Muslim Americans who neglected their duty to proselytize among non-Muslims.

Later in his career, al-Faruqi worked to "Islamize" non-Muslim forms of knowledge so that Muslims could benefit from Western thought without accepting its colonialist or Judeo-Christian biases. He pointed to *ijtihad*, or "independent reason," as the common link between Western learning and Islamic ethics. In 1981, he formalized this project by cofounding the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT.

On May 27, 1986, a knife-wielding man attacked al-Faruqi and his family in their Philadelphia home. Al-Faruqi and his wife, Lois, were fatally stabbed, while their pregnant daughter survived multiple wounds. Investigators suspected that political differences had motivated the attack. The police arrested Yusuf Ali, whom family friends identified as an acquaintance of the al-Faruqi family and a member of the Nation of Islam. Ali received a death sentence after confessing to the murders.

Al-Faruqi published more than 100 articles and 25 books during his career. His influence can be seen in Muslim organizations and religion departments across North America, where Islam is being more widely taught as one of the three Abrahamic faiths. Among his students was John Esposito, who is currently University Professor at Georgetown University and founding director of the Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding. He is one of the most prolific and influential scholars of Islam in the United States.

William Brown

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**Al-Fatiha Foundation** See LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER MUSLIMS.

### fatwa

A fatwa is an Islamic legal opinion. For over a thousand years, Muslims in various times and places have sought guidance from Islamic scholars on the question of how to apply the SHARI'A, or Islamic LAW and ethics, to daily life. Seeking a fatwa, Muslims have generally turned to elite groups of men—called by various titles, including ulama, muftis, and *faqih*s—who are well versed in *fiqh*, or Islamic jurisprudence. This tradition has continued on American soil, as Muslim Americans have attempted to reinterpret Islamic religion for their particular circumstances.

While more research is needed on the history of the fatwa in America, perhaps the earliest usage of the term occurred among AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES or among AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS familiar with Sunni Islamic traditions in the 1920s or 1930s. By the 1950s, the term was certainly used by Muslim-American immigrants who sought answers to the question of how to practice Islam in the United States. In the mid-1950s, Muslim groups such as the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA began to organize Islamic conventions in North America. During an Islamic convention in Ontario, Canada, in 1955, "Brains Trust" sessions were presided over by Muslim scholars who formed a small fatwa committee to respond to questions relating to jurisprudence posed by lay members of the conference.

To consolidate the religious needs of the then-burgeoning Muslim community and to respond to their questions, the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION, established in 1963, created a Religious Affairs Committee. This committee later evolved into the Fiqh Committee of North America. The committee's activities were extremely limited in scope, primarily concerned with determining the exact dates to

begin and end the Ramadan, the lunar month during which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset.

Until the mid-1980s, most fatwas issued in the United States were the work of so-called imported imams, or leaders. Immigrant ethnic communities often sought imams from their respective homelands to help guide their lives in the United States. These Muslim immigrant communities felt unable to produce qualified legal opinions to address complicated questions that were context-specific to life in America. They sent these questions to certain muftis in their respective countries for what they considered to be more reliable and authentic religious opinions.

In the 1980s, for example, Taha Jabir Alawani, the founder of the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT, collected 28 questions common among Muslim Americans and sent them to the Islamic Fiqh Academy of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The questions covered a range of issues including naturalization, child rearing, marriage with non-Muslims, Muslim burial, selling and renting mosques, and work in places where *haram*, or prohibited, items were manufactured or sold, among other things. In 1987, the North American branch of the International Islamic Relief Organization requested a fatwa from the Islamic Fiqh Academy of the Muslim World League on the issues of receiving donations from non-Muslims and compensating its employees from the organization's income.

As immigrant Muslim communities began to think of the United States as a permanent home, the phenomenon of "imported fatwas" became problematic. Immigrant and indigenous Muslim Americans were disappointed by a lack of appreciation for local conditions and circumstances on the part of such foreign muftis. Community leaders and activists came to realize that such fatwas often failed to address the peculiarity of the American experience. In the local American context, these foreign imams were often simply not convincing enough, as they knew little English or had minimal knowledge of U.S. law and culture.

Some Muslim-American scholars and leaders like Taha Jabir Alawani, KHALED ABOU EL FADL, and Salah Al-Sawi disapproved of foreign fatwas being applied to the contemporary American context. To counter this trend they encouraged *fiqh* scholarship in the United States. Alawani, for example, rejected fatwas that made it unlawful for Muslims to hold citizenship in non-Muslim states and that permitted Muslims to disobey U.S. laws. He argued that *dar al-Islam*, or the Abode of Islam, can be any place where Muslims find the freedom to practice their religion and spread the message of their faith. The laws of such a place must be obeyed, he said. Alawani led calls to establish a new category of Islamic jurisprudence, a *fiqh* for Muslim minorities, which was based on the circumstances of each particular community. In 1988, the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) Fiqh Committee transformed itself

into the FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA in an attempt to effectively confront the many legal issues facing Muslims in North America and to issue fatwas that consider both religious authority and the reality of American life.

The emergence of the INTERNET and its popularity among Muslim Americans made it an important tool for transforming and disseminating religious knowledge, and especially for issuing fatwas. Believers would send in their most pressing questions to scholars, whether based in Muslim countries or in the West. Islamic centers, imams, and other religious authorities developed their own Web sites and blogs to disseminate their fatwas among a wide audience. "Cyber-fatwas" and "cyber-muftis" became part of Islamic discourse and actual titles claimed by some individuals professing religious authority.

Although the Internet facilitated the fatwa process, however, it also undermined the quality of the fatwa institution, which used to rely on personal contact between the mufti and the fatwa seeker, and on rigorous research by the mufti on circumstances and religious considerations critical to the question. In the digital age, fatwa seekers can more easily engage in fatwa shopping if they do not initially get the answer they want. On the other hand, the issuer of the fatwa can bask in a cyber cloak of relative anonymity as his identity and qualifications may be difficult to ascertain.

Perhaps the best-known and most popular fatwa issued by and for Muslim Americans came in response to the attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. In 2005, the Fiqh Council of North America issued a fatwa condemning terrorism and all acts of extremism, including suicide bombings. The opinion was endorsed by every major Muslim-American organization, over a hundred local mosques and Islamic centers, and dozens of Islamic scholars throughout the United States.

Said Abdelrahman

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### Fatwa Concerning Noble Drew Ali (1931)

*In 1931, scholars at al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, considered by many Muslims at the time to be the most prestigious Islamic seminary in the world, issued a fatwa, or religious ruling, regarding the claims of Noble Drew Ali, founder of the Moorish Science Temple of America. The fatwa had been requested by Satti*



*Majid, a Sudanese missionary who resided in the United States from 1904 until 1929, the year he traveled to Cairo. More than 75 scholars from the Middle East, North Africa, Turkey, and Indonesia signed the Arabic-language version of the fatwa, issued by the head of al-Azhar and translated into English for distribution in the United States. Addressed to the "Reverend Majid," the fatwa, reprinted below, condemned Noble Drew Ali as a religious imposter, since his claims to be a prophet conflicted with the Sunni Islamic belief that there would be no further prophets after the seventh-century Prophet Muhammad of Arabia. It was one of the first examples of Sunni Muslim religious authorities from abroad attempting to influence the practice of Islamic religion in the United States.*



The Reverend Sayed Sati Majid.

May the Peace and Blessings of Allah be with you. In reply to your inquiry concerning a man who claims to be the promised prophet whose advent Jesus Christ proclaimed and asserts that the Islam which existed prior to him is not the true Islam, we hereby inform you that whosoever claims prophethood after the prophet Mohammed son of Abdullah, son of Abdul-Muttalib, son of Hashim, is positively an imposter and a disbeliever in the very text of the Holy Quran which says of the Prophet, on whom be peace:

'No man from among you can claim Mohammed for a parent, but he is the Apostle of Allah and the seal of the Prophets'.

No Moslem is there, whatever his sect or creed, but would readily condemn to apostasy and disbelief whosoever says of Islam that it is not true Islam which the Lord has pleased to give unto mankind as signified in the verse:

'This day have I perfected your Religion for you and completed mine favours upon you and chosen Islam of all other religions, to be the accepted religion unto Me'.

The truth and clear signs of Islam have been definitely established and the learned men have failed to find a reasonable criticism whereby to assail it.

Such a claim, therefore, could only be made by an unbeliever or a mentally-deranged person, and only those of like mentality would follow him.

No importance, therefore, should be attached to him and he should be completely ignored.

*Sheikh Al-Jamii-Al-Azhar  
[head, al-Azhar University]*

Issued at Cairo on the tenth of November, 1931.  
The above is a true translation of the original Fatwa in Arabic.



Source: Ahmed I. Abu Shouk et al. "A Sudanese Missionary to the United States: Satti Majid, Shaykh al-Islam in North America, and His Encounter with Noble Drew Ali, Prophet of the Moorish Science Temple." *Sudanica Africa* 8 (1997): 182.

## **Federation of Islamic Associations of the United States and Canada**

The Federation of Islamic Associations of the United States and Canada (FIA), formally established in 1954 in CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, was the first national (and binational) association to bring together Muslims of diverse cultural and religious origins to sustain and invigorate the practice of Islam in North America. Adopting the slogan "hold fast to the rope of God and do not disperse," the organization had three primary interests. The first was to connect Muslim Americans to one another and to the global community of Muslims at a time when their population in the United States was small, highly dispersed, and isolated. The second was to seek recognition and accommodations toward the practice of Islam from mainstream institutions. The third was to educate Muslims and non-Muslims alike about Islamic history, jurisprudence, and practice. Through this groundbreaking work, the FIA hoped to contribute to the modern renaissance of Islam.

Founded by Abdullah Igram (1923–81) and others of Lebanese and Syrian heritage, the FIA was quick to reach out to non-Arab Muslims as well, and their member organizations (MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS, youth associations, religious and ethnic clubs) soon came to include Albanian, Pakistani, Iranian, and African-American communities. The group was also explicitly ecumenical and included active leadership from both Sunni and Shi'a traditions. And while the group's first members were predominantly U.S.-born or had been citizens for several decades, the organization also provided an important forum for interaction between North American Muslims, foreign students, and newly arriving immigrants. The group was especially concerned with the needs of second-generation Muslim Americans. In addition to distributing educational materials, the FIA provided youth conventions and an annual summer camp, and sponsored Muslim youth associations nationwide.

After having served in the U.S. Army in the Philippines in WORLD WAR II, Abdullah Igram was committed to redressing the discrimination he faced as a Muslim in the armed

forces. At the time, military dog tags identified servicemen as Protestants, Catholics, Jews, or those of “no religion.” Those who died in uniform were buried according to the relevant protocol, which meant that Muslims were not granted an Islamic burial. Igram raised these concerns with the Eisenhower administration in the 1950s, and the Department of Defense granted Muslims the right to have their religion recognized on their dog tags. The FIA also worked with the Boy Scouts of America to create the position of Muslim chaplain and to provide an “In the Name of God” merit badge for the study of Islam. In 1978, the FIA worked with the Equal Opportunity Commission and the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs to ensure Muslim employees the right to observe the Muslim religious HOLIDAYS of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

Similarly, Canadian and American Muslims sought recognition with Islamic institutions overseas through the FIA. In the 1950s, representatives of the Muslim World League and of Arab and Pakistani embassies in Washington began attending the FIA’s annual conventions, and the Muslim World League recognized the FIA as the official organization through which North American Muslims arranged their participation in the annual hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca. The FIA also provided scholarships to Muslim Americans who sought to study Islam or other subjects at prestigious universities in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. When FIA delegations began traveling overseas in the late 1950s to Muslim-majority countries, they were hosted by leading religious authorities and were often received by heads of state. Through these connections, American mosques often hired and funded well-trained imams and raised much-needed financial support for new mosque construction beginning in the early 1960s. The FIA became a nonvoting member of the United Nations in 1976.

In keeping with their educational objectives, the FIA published a series of journals and newsletters. In 1958, Imam Vehbi Ismail of the Albanian Islamic Center in Harper Woods, Michigan, began editing *Muslim Life*, a quarterly journal that featured essays on Islamic history and jurisprudence, editorials and letters, “news from the Islamic world,” and reviews of books on Islamic topics. In 1960, the FIA inaugurated a monthly newsletter, *Muslim Star*, also edited and produced in DETROIT. The *Star* became a forum for community news, provided announcements and coverage of the FIA’s annual conventions and board meetings, and kept readers abreast of the development and growth of their member organizations. Both publications also promoted the work of the FIA’s leading clerics, several of whom published English-language books and educational materials about Islam intended for American readers.

The FIA’s annual conventions moved from city to city each year, giving individual communities the opportunity

to exhibit their collective accomplishments on behalf of Islam, giving young Muslims the chance to connect with one another, and providing the leadership of the Muslim community with the opportunity to discuss important concerns they shared in common. The July 1965 convention held at the Statler-Hilton Hotel in Detroit, for example, featured PRAYER, a “Youth Jam Session,” a field trip to a nearby Dearborn mosque, and a concert by the “incomparable vocalist” Hanan and the Carlos Rivera Orchestra.

In the 1960s, as a new generation of relatively well-educated Muslim immigrants began arriving in the United States for work and study, the Muslim-American community became more political in orientation and also more concerned with religious authority and propriety. These changes were reflected within the pages of the *Star* and on the podium at the group’s annual conventions. Eventually these concerns led to the institution of an annual “religious seminar” in addition to the group’s annual convention.

The annual convention was viewed with increasing skepticism by many conservative Muslims, who did not approve of its formal banquets featuring live entertainment or of its less formal sock hops and other youth dances. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the group became more explicitly political, exposing double standards in U.S. foreign policy objectives, developing an office to challenge STEREOTYPES and misconceptions about Islam in the United States, and issuing financial appeals on behalf of relief efforts in Muslim regions.

By the late 1970s, the FIA found itself increasingly divided among those who valued the institution’s ethnic roots and social agenda, those who were more outspoken critics of UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS with the Middle East, and those who thought it should become a strictly religious institution. These divisions slowly drained support for the organization, and in 1980, infighting on the board of directors led to a legal battle over the FIA’s future. The group’s founders and longtime volunteers were shut out of the decision-making process and withdrew from the organization. It continued to function into the 1990s, but in a greatly reduced capacity, and was eclipsed by rival organizations like the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA.

Sally Howell

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## feminists

Most Muslim-American feminists have not felt comfortable identifying themselves as feminists, since many feminists in the 19th and 20th centuries, including so-called first- and second-wave white feminists did not always see feminism in multicultural or global terms. Most assumed that their secular, white, middle or upper-class, heterosexual notions of gender equality should be those of all women, everywhere. Even in the beginning of the feminist women's third wave from the 1990s to the first decade of the 21st century, it was not unusual for feminists to exclude Muslim women's voices in the women's liberation scholarship, declaring that it was impossible to be a Muslim and a feminist.

Some Muslim-American feminists have agreed, albeit for differing reasons. Women's activists Asma Barlas, a Pakistani-American, and AMINA WADUD, the African-American author of *Qur'an and Woman* (1992), have refused to be called feminists. They have argued that the secular outlook of feminism cannot be reconciled with the central role of faith in their struggle to obtain gender justice in Islam. Secular feminists such as Haideh Moghissi, an Iranian Canadian, have been equally uncomfortable combining the term *feminist* with Islam. For Moghissi, all religions are hierarchal and antifeminist. So, any "Islamic" feminism can never be authentically feminist.

Scholars of Islamic feminism such as Margot Badran, Valentine Moghadam, Afsaneh Najambadi, and miriam cooke have advocated for using the term *feminist* as a strategy rather than as an identity. As a strategy, feminism is a way of thinking about society that highlights how gender roles contribute to injustices primarily against women and proposes action to overcome them. Professor miriam cooke also stressed in her book, *Women Claim Islam* (2001), that Muslim feminists have been involved in political and social struggles that link their concerns for women's empowerment to struggles for racial and ethnic equality, jobs, human rights, and other concerns.

### ISLAMIC RELIGION FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Though many pioneering Muslim-American activists such as Amina Wadud may not have called themselves feminists, they nevertheless fought for women's rights in both Muslim and non-Muslim American communities. They did not deny the oppression of women in Islamic cultures, but they insisted that male-centered interpretations of Islamic religion—not Islam itself—was to blame. They called women and men to read the QUR'AN for themselves, without having to consult the sexist readings of traditional scholars. Lelah Bakhtiar, an Iranian American, brought a woman's voice to the Qur'an by writing a woman-centered translation of the sacred text. Like other Muslims in the United States and around the world committed to the REVIVAL of Islam in modern times, these

women's approach to the scriptures of Islam was both revolutionary and reformist, openly criticizing the traditional scholars' monopoly on interpretation.

Riffat Hassan, a Pakistani American, argued that the Qur'an is the "Magna Carta" of human rights and should not be blamed for injustices carried out in its name. She showed that the story of Adam and Eve in the Qur'an differs from the versions available in the Sunna and the *Israeliyyat*, or Jewish sources known to the early Muslim community. In the Qur'an, male and female were created as equals from the same substance at the same time. But the Sunna and *Israeliyyat* tell the more familiar story of Eve's creation from Adam's rib and as secondary to him.

Professor Leila Ahmed, an Egyptian American, took a similar tack in her influential work *Women and Gender in Islam* (1992) and her later memoir *A Border Passage* (2000). Ahmed distinguished between two "Islams." The first is an ethical and spiritual Islam passed down by mothers to their children embodied by a personal engagement with the Qur'an. The second is a patriarchal and legalistic Islam passed down by male scholars to their students embodied by the bureaucratic Islamic intellectual tradition. Nimat Hafez Barazangi, an Iranian American, also took this approach in her book, *Woman's Identity and the Qur'an* (2005), in which she asserted that women need to develop a direct "woman-centered" relationship with the Qur'an. For Barazangi, as the soul comes to understand the Qur'an beyond patriarchy, it inwardly identifies with the Qur'an and produces inherently just interpretations.

### ISLAMIC WOMEN'S ACTIVISM BEYOND THE ACADEMY

Working on the legal front, pioneer Azizah al-Hibri, an Egyptian American, founded the organization Karamah, Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights, in 1993 to rectify misunderstandings about the legal status of women in Islam for Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Karamah (which means *dignity*) has done influential work on nearly every area of concern for Muslim women in the United States and abroad. Like Hassan and Ahmed, al-Hibri blamed sexist interpretations of the Qur'an for women's hardships but argued that SHARI'A, or Islamic law, was far more flexible, protective of women's rights, and open to reform than some Muslim and secular feminists imagined. Scholar and filmmaker Ziba Mir-Hosseini, an Iranian American, also produced work that showed how Islamic legal rulings forced men and women to take on particular gender roles.

The diversity of Muslim feminists is most powerfully seen in their LITERATURE, ART, and MUSIC. Academic, novelist, and poet Mohja Kahf, a Syrian American, has written essays on women's literature from the early Islamic era and critical accounts of the West's sexual objectification of

“Eastern” women, has penned novels and essays on female sexuality and Islam, and has written poetry such as her Hagar collection, woman-centered interpretations of the Qur’an written in verse. Sabina England, a British-Asian-Indian American, performance artist, and playwright, has explored violence against women of both a racial and a gendered nature that exposes women’s rage and sometimes even revels in violent retribution.

Tayibbah Taylor’s magazine *AZIZAH* is a “woman’s magazine” covering Muslim women’s accomplishments, struggles, and concerns in which Muslim women’s first-person narratives, political writing, poetry, essays, and art have been published. Queer singer/songwriter Sena Hussain, a Pakistani Canadian, of the group Secret Trial Five became the first woman to sing on an ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) stage when she and her punk friends crashed open-mic night at an ISNA convention in 2007.

Grassroots women’s activists have sometimes faced hostility from their own Muslim communities. Pioneer Hadayai Majeed, an African American, founded Baitul Salaam, or the House of Peace, in 1997 to bring awareness of domestic violence in her ATLANTA Muslim community and provide shelter for Muslim victims of domestic violence. She and her sister organizers faced opposition from men in her community and also encountered a surprising lack of interest among the women, especially professional women. Rather than relying on the Muslim-American community for support, Baitul Salaam sought assistance from local and national domestic violence organizations.

When journalist Asra Nomani, the Pakistani-American author of *Standing Alone at Mecca* (2005), and Ahmed Nassef, an Arab American, organized a woman-led mixed gender prayer in New York on March 18, 2005, many Muslim Americans and Muslims from abroad criticized the event, saying that it violated the taboo against woman-led congregational prayer. The incident sparked national conversations about female leadership in Muslim communities and gender segregation in most Muslim-American mosques. Scholar Ingrid Mattson, a white Canadian American elected the president of ISNA in 2006, responded by advocating for women’s leadership on mosque boards and equal space for women in the mosque, but reaffirmed the religious prohibition against women leading prayer.

## CONCLUSION

To a degree, the discussion of an explicit feminism in Muslim-American history obscures the struggles for the empowerment of women that have been present since the first Muslim slaves, whether male or female, resisted the dehumanization of slavery centuries ago. Muslim-American women, in other words, have suffered other forms of DISCRIMINATION than that based on GENDER, and they have sought to challenge such oppression. AFRICAN-AMERICAN

MUSLIM women thought that many of the first black Muslim mosques and movements such as the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America and NATION OF ISLAM would liberate them from racial discrimination—and their own sins as well. The FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA was led in the 1970s by an immigrant woman, and some of its member mosques stressed the need for equal opportunity regardless of gender and a public role for women in the mosque.

More strictly defined, however, *feminism* has been a disputed term in Muslim America, as it has in the United States more generally. Muslim-American “feminists” have sometimes refused the label because of the anti-Islamic attitudes of other feminists. Other Muslim Americans have embraced the term, attempting to build bridges between their movement for gender justice and those of other political progressives, whether Muslim or not. Still others, including socially conservative Muslims whose voices echo those of other religious conservatives in the United States, want nothing to do with feminism, which, according to them, undermines family values. In all cases, the word *feminism* inspires debates that are not likely to disappear in the future.

Laury Silvers

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## Leila Ahmed, *Muslim Women’s Studies in America* (2000)

Leila Ahmed, professor of women’s studies in religion at Harvard Divinity School, was born in 1940 in Cairo, Egypt, where she grew up in a multireligious community of Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Her upper-class parents sent her to an English school and taught her to value Western achievements in the arts and sciences. Her grandmother and other female relatives introduced her to traditional Islam, a “woman’s Islam” that, she said, differed from



*modern Islam, an official and male-dominated version of the faith. "Islam, as I got it from them," Ahmed has said, "was gentle, generous, pacifist, inclusive, somewhat mystical." After the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 and Suez Crisis of 1956, Ahmed emigrated from Egypt to Great Britain, where she went to high school at the all-girls Girton College, and eventually earned a doctorate at Cambridge University. As an Egyptian woman living in a strange land, she grew weary of Western stereotypes of Muslims and Arabs, and after completing her studies, accepted an offer from the Persian Gulf state Abu Dhabi to develop programs in women's education. In 1979, she emigrated to the United States. Seeking a job as a professor of women's studies, which was still in its formative years as an academic field of study, she once again encountered Western prejudices toward Muslims and Arabs. It frustrated her that these negative attitudes came from her feminist colleagues, who resisted Ahmed's attempts to create a well-rounded and balanced portrait of the lives of Arab and Muslim women. In 1992, Ahmed wrote *Women and Gender in Islam*, a landmark work that challenged one-dimensional views of Muslim women as silent and oppressed. In 2000, she published *A Border Passage: From Cairo to America—A Woman's Journey*, an autobiography that reflected on her upbringing, education, and, as shown in the excerpt below, the early days of women's studies in the United States.*



It was no easy transition, the transition to America and to women's studies.

First of all, live American feminism was not anything like what I had imagined. Reading its thoughtful texts in the quiet of the desert [of Abu Dhabi], I had, I suppose, formed a notion of feminism as tranquil, lucid, meditative—whereas, of course, the living feminism I encountered once on these shores was anything but a lucid, tranquil, meditative affair. Militant, vital, tempestuous, passionate, visionary, turbulent—any or all of these might be more apt. In the gatherings of feminists—at the various conferences, meetings, and public lectures that I now single-mindedly threw myself into attending—there was a kind of raw, exhilarating energy and a sense, intellectually, of freewheeling anarchy. Almost as if people felt themselves caught up in some holy purifying fire that was burning away the dross and obscurities from their minds, freeing them to dream dreams and see visions and to gather themselves up and prepare to unmake and remake the world, remake it as it had never been made before.

And all this *was* tremendously exhilarating and exciting. But along with exhilaration came shock. For I naturally made a point at these conferences

of attending, and often participating in, sessions and panels on Muslim women. Not that these were common. The women's studies conferences I attended when I first came in 1980—I remember one at Barnard [College in New York City], and another in Bloomington, Indiana—focused primarily on white women and were overwhelmingly attended by white women. But such sessions on Muslim women as there were left me nearly speechless and certainly in shock at the combination of hostility and sheer ignorance that the Muslim panelists, myself included, almost invariably encountered. We could not pursue the investigation of our heritage, traditions, religion in the way that white women were investigating and rethinking theirs. Whatever aspect of our history or religion each of us had been trying to reflect on, we would be besieged, at the end of our presentations, with furious questions and declarations openly dismissive of Islam. People quite commonly did not even seem to know that there was some connection between the patriarchal vision to be found in Islam and that in Judaism and Christianity. Regularly we would be asked belligerently, "Well what about the veil" or "What about clitoridectomy?" when none of us had mentioned either subject for the simple reason that it was completely irrelevant to the topics of our papers. The implication was that, in trying to examine and rethink our traditions rather than dismissing them out of hand, we were implicitly defending whatever our audience considered to be indefensible. And the further implication and presumption was that, whereas they—white women, Christian women, Jewish women—could rethink their heritage and religions and traditions, we had to abandon ours because they were just intrinsically, essentially, and irredeemably misogynist and patriarchal in a way that theirs (apparently) were not. In contrast to their situation, our salvation entailed not arguing with and working to change our traditions but giving up our cultures, religions, and traditions and adopting theirs.

And so the first thing I wrote after my arrival and within months of being in America was an article addressing the extraordinary barrage of hostility and ignorance with which I found myself besieged as I moved among this community of women. They were women who were engaged in radically rejecting, contesting, and rethinking their own traditions and heritage and the ingrained prejudices against women that formed

part of that heritage but who turned on me a gaze completely structured and hidebound by that heritage; in their attitudes and beliefs about Islam and women in Islam, they plainly revealed their unquestioning faith in and acceptance of the prejudiced, hostile, and often ridiculous notions that their heritage had constructed about Islam and its women. I had come wanting to read and think and write about Muslim women, but it was this that commanded my attention as the subject that I desperately had to address. The first piece I wrote, "Western Ethnocentrism and Perceptions of the Harem," still rings for me with the shocked and furious tones of that initial encounter.

My first year in America, 1979, was also the year of the Iran hostage crisis, and I am sure now that the hostility toward Islam by which I felt myself besieged was more pronounced than usual because of that situation. But as I would learn soon enough, the task of addressing racism for feminists of color in the West is, and has to be, an ongoing and central part of the work and the thinking that we ordinarily do, no less so than the work of addressing male dominance. And so my first experience of American feminism was a kind of initiation and baptism by fire into what has indeed been an ongoing part of my thought and work ever since. Back then, though, it was still early in our understanding of the racist gaze the white feminist movement turned on women of other cultures and races. [African-American poet] Audre Lorde, at a conference in 1976 (in a presentation much-anthologized since), was among the first to identify, and speak out against, this strand in white feminist thought, and June Jordan, Bell Hooks, and others followed up with work on the subject.

Also making my initial experience of America a more arduous experience than it might otherwise have been was the fact that I took a job in women's studies. I had come intent on working in this field and had applied for an advertised position as a part-time lecturer at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Although the pay was low, I felt that a part-time job was the sensible way into the field, whose scholarly productions I'd been reading about in the desert but about which I had still an enormous amount to learn. A part-time job would give me the time, I thought, to do all the extra reading that I no doubt needed to do.

Of course I found that my part-time job, as is so often the case, was only technically part-time. In fact, preparing classes, teaching, and attend-

ing meetings took up every moment of my waking life. I have never worked so hard in my life as in my first couple of years in America. Of course, too, the fact that everything was new to me contributed to making those years so tough. Teaching in a new academic system in a new country must always entail demanding transitions, but I am sure that moment in the history of women's studies in America, rather than, say, taking a job in a more established department, created a whole set of unique hurdles and difficulties.

Women's studies programs in that era, including the program that I joined, had an embattled and precarious relationship with the university. There was sometimes open hostility from faculty members in other departments and, occasionally, condescension and a presumption that the women's studies faculty must be ignorant, undereducated fanatical women. For me, as someone coming from abroad who had not been part of the American feminist movement, there was one very particular difficulty that I had not anticipated when I imagined that, by working hard and reading widely, I could quickly master the ideas, theories, perspectives that I needed to be familiar with. I could not quickly master them through reading, for the simple reason that a lot of them had not yet found their way into print. The ideas that I heard passionately voiced and argued around me by faculty and also by students were part of a rich, vibrant, diverse, and internally contentious cargo of debates that had been generated by an intellectually vital social movement. This was what I had stepped into in joining women's studies—a living social movement of quite extraordinary but as yet mainly oral intellectual vitality, about to spill over and become a predominantly intellectual, academic, and theoretical force rather than, as it had in part been in its beginnings, an activist social movement, and the continuing evolution of these ideas, that were providing the foundations of women's studies. I stepped, that is to say, too, into the stream of what was as yet a largely unwritten oral culture—the oral, living culture of the feminist movement, a culture to which there were as yet almost no guides, no maps, no books.

There were often passionate debates, both among my colleagues and in the feminist community more widely, between, say, Radical feminists and Marxist feminists, debates that could become quite furious. It was clear that there was a history here, a common, shared evolution, in the course

of which particular positions, in relation to this or that issue, had been progressively defined and sometimes had become polarized. But to someone arriving from the Arab Gulf, what these positions and issues were and why they should generate such passion was, at first anyway, profoundly unfathomable. And there was nothing, or very little, in those days, that I could read that would enlighten me and make the issues, debates, and history accessible. Moreover, this culture and history that I had not been part of informed nearly everything in women's studies, not only intellectual issues but also ordinary routines and exchanges and conversations. It was this culture, for instance, that determined that all decisions were to be made by consensus and not by vote. It determined, too, the code of dress—as strict here, in its way, as in Abu Dhabi. For those were the days when whether you shaved your legs or wore a bra signaled where you stood on the internal feminist battle lines and/or your degree of feminist enlightenment. In Abu Dhabi it had been easy to ask about appropriate dress and the meaning of this or that style, but here not only were you supposed to just know, but supposedly there was no dress code and people here—as I was emphatically told when I ventured the question in my early innocent days—simply dressed exactly how they wished. And so there were many ways in which the women's studies culture in which I found myself was an unknown culture to me to which I had no key and maps. But, as with any other culture, after a period of intense immersion, my confusion naturally resolved into comprehension.



Source: Leila Ahmed. "From Abu Dhabi to America." In *A Border Passage: From Cairo to America—A Woman's Journey*. New York: Penguin, 2000, pp. 291–295.

## film

During the 1920s, American films frequently portrayed Muslims and Arabs as violent and exotic. These stereotypes persisted through the 20th century. The few Muslims in the film industry responded to these stereotypes by offering themselves as interpreters of the East for a Western audience. In the 1970s, the prominence of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS in American popular culture created a new image of the Muslim American as someone resisting racial oppression. Since the 1990s, Muslims have entered the American

film industry in greater numbers, contributing to documentaries on Muslim history as well as to mainstream movies. Although the American film industry has not yet established a large body of work portraying Muslims as fully human individuals, the work of these Muslim Americans has begun to challenge the STEREOTYPES that have defined the "Hollywood Muslim" for decades.

### EARLY HOLLYWOOD

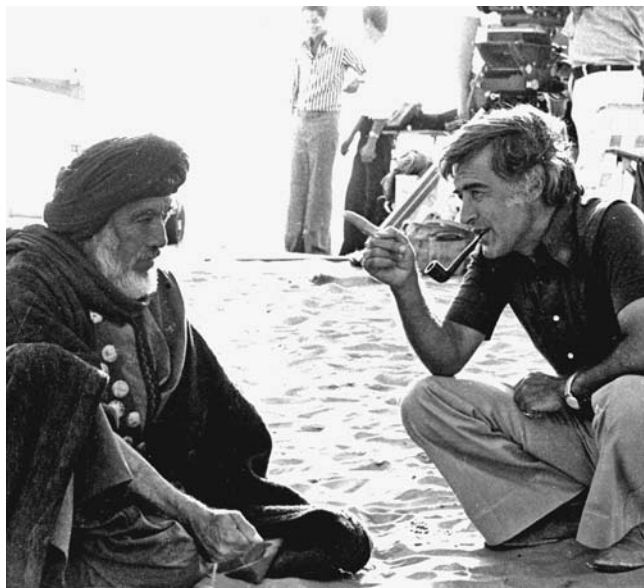
Movies such as *The Sheik* (1921) and its many sequels portrayed Arab Muslims as violent, primitive, and romantic. Muslim men in these films embodied a masculine code of honor that was savage and foreign, yet secretly attractive to the liberated American "flapper" girls of the 1920s. In the movie, the Sheik, played by Rudolph Valentino, an Italian-American actor, abducts a British woman, who learns to love him, especially when she discovers that he is not really an Arab but a British orphan. Such abduction narratives, which often involved American Indians, Turks, or Arabs, repeated themes that had been popular in American literature since the 19th century.

Ackmed Abdullah (1881–1945), probably the earliest American screenwriter to claim a Muslim identity, presented himself as a Westerner raised among Muslims, very much like the Sheik. According to his colorful autobiography, *The Cat Had Nine Lives* (1939), Ackmed Abdullah Nadir Khan el-Durani el-Iddrissyeh, as he called himself, was christened Alexander Nicholayevitch Romanoff, the son of a Russian duke and an Afghan princess. He was raised as a Muslim by his mother in Afghanistan but completed his education at Eton, an elite boarding school in England. Arriving in the United States at the beginning of the WORLD WAR I, he wrote plays and romances set in the eastern reaches of the British Empire. Abdullah wrote the screenplays for two popular films: *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), an adaptation of the *Arabian Nights*, and *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer* (1935), the story of two British officers defending British India against wily Muslim invaders from the Afghan frontier.

### THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY

In 1962, Omar Sharif (1932– ) received an Academy Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor in *Lawrence of Arabia*, the story of T. E. Lawrence, a British officer who promoted the Arab revolt against Turkish rule during World War I. Like *The Sheik*, *Lawrence of Arabia* depicted a Westerner's encounter with tribal, honor-obsessed Arabs, though it did so in a more sympathetic light. Omar Sharif played Sharif Ali, a tribal leader who at first appears as a murdering savage but ultimately becomes Lawrence's friend and conscience.

Omar Sharif (Michel Demitri Chalhoub) was raised as a Christian in Syria. He converted to Islam in 1955. He had a long and varied career in America, and won a Golden Globe



Syrian-American filmmaker Moustapha Akkad (right) directs Anthony Quinn in the 1981 film *Omar Mukhtar*, or *Lion of the Desert*. (AP/Images)

award for his title role in *Dr. Zhivago* (1965). During the 1970s and 1980s, he wrote a syndicated column on bridge for the *Chicago Tribune*. He returned to film in 2006 in the French film *Monsieur Ibrahim et les Fleurs du Coran* (Mr. Ibrahim and the flowers of the QUR'AN) as a Muslim shopkeeper who befriends a Jewish boy and teaches him about the Qur'an.

In the 1970s, boxer MUHAMMAD ALI (1942– ) starred as himself in *Muhammad Ali: The Greatest* (1974), a biopic about his career. The film charted Ali's struggles inside and outside the ring as the heavyweight boxing champion who gave up his career to fight induction into the armed services during the VIETNAM WAR. It was one of the first times that a Muslim American represented himself to an American film-going audience.

In 1976, the Syrian-born director and producer MOUSTAPHA AKKAD (1920–2005), noting increased American interest in Islam, directed and produced *The Message*, a biographical film about the Prophet MUHAMMAD, to bridge the divide between the Islamic world and the West. The film depicted Muhammad as a champion of the poor and oppressed. Rather than dub the film for an Arab audience, Akkad shot each scene of the film twice: once in Arabic and once in English. The film received an Academy Award nomination for Best Original Score.

Although Akkad consulted Muslim religious leaders during production, the film provoked protests from some Muslims offended by the prospect of an actor playing Muhammad. In deference to a Muslim tradition that avoids depicting Muhammad and his companions, Akkad never

showed the face or body of Muhammad in the film. Instead, music suggests his presence off camera or the camera adopts his point of view. Muhammad's uncle Hamza (played by Anthony Quinn) and a female convert Hind bint Utbah (played by Muna Wassef) occupy the center of the film.

But this accommodation did not appease some critics. Under pressure, the Moroccan government withdrew its initial support for the film. Akkad eventually made the film in Libya with the backing of Libyan leader Mu'ammār Gadhafi. The most dramatic protest against the film in the United States took place in March 1977, during a three-day siege of buildings and hostages in Washington, D.C., by Hanafi leader HAMAAS KHAALIS. The siege ended when ambassadors from Egypt, Iran, and Pakistan successfully negotiated for the release of the hostages by quoting from the Qur'an and offering to join Khaalis in PRAYER. Such dramatic reactions, however, did not reflect the long-term Muslim embrace of the film, which by the late 20th century was frequently shown on Arab television stations and screened by Muslim groups in the United States as part of public-awareness campaigns.

Following *The Message*, Akkad produced the iconic slasher film *Halloween* (1978) and its many sequels. In 1980, he returned to Libya to direct *Omar Mukhtar*, or *Lion of the Desert*, about Bedouin leader Omar Mukhtar's struggle against the Italian Fascist army during WORLD WAR II. Akkad presented Islam as promoting civilized restraint during the war. Omar Mukhtar (Anthony Quinn) spares a young Italian soldier, saying that Islam forbids him to kill a captive. The film, funded by Gadhafi, received poor reviews in America, though it became popular among Muslims in the United States and abroad, where it was frequently broadcast on television. It was banned in Italy.

#### LATE TWENTIETH- AND EARLY TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY FILM

In 1988, the MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL (MPAC) offered a Media Award to recognize positive portrayals of Muslims in American film. Since 2007, when it established a Hollywood Bureau, MPAC has actively promoted Muslim entry into the film and entertainment industries. At the same time, a new generation of Muslims, including African Americans and the children of immigrants from the Middle East and Pakistan, began to graduate from film schools. Muslim rap stars also developed film careers.

MOS DEF (1973– ) was the most prominent Muslim rapper to enter the film industry. His many appearances included roles in the films *Where's Marlow?* (1998), *Monster's Ball* (2001), *The Italian Job* (2003), and *Talladega Nights* (2006). In addition, the rap star Ice Cube (1969– ), who called himself a "natural Muslim," made the transition from music to film. Ice Cube appeared in *Boys N the Hood* (1991), *All About the Benjamins* (2002), and *Barber Shop* (2002).





Muslim Americans (left to right) Preacher Moss, Azhar Usman, and Mo'Nique ham it up in a promotional photograph for their comedy tour and film, *Allah Made Me Funny* (2008). (Tristram Kenton/Lebrecht Music & Arts)

In 1999, he costarred in *Three Kings*, which won MPAC's Media Award. The film broke new ground by emphasizing the plight of Iraqi civilians betrayed by the U.S. government and trapped by Saddam Hussein.

*Three Kings* also featured Egyptian-born actor Sayed Badraya as an Iraqi interrogator. Subsequently, Badraya used his experience as assistant director (*True Lies*, 2004) to make a series of short films featuring an Arab perspective on the "war on terror." These included *The Interrogation* (2002), which won Best Creative Short at the New York International Film Festival, and *T for Terrorist* (2003), which won Best Short Film at the Boston International Film Festival. In *T for Terrorist*, Badraya plays an Arab actor who refuses to play "the terrorist" in yet another film.

Muhammad Ali Hasan's *Rabia* (2008) likewise explored the subject of terrorism. The short film, which won the Provincetown Grand Jury award among other prizes, is a sympathetic portrait of a suicide bomber (Haniah Jodet) and the experiences that shape her. Hasan, the son of Pakistani immigrants, founded the nonprofit Muslims for America in response to the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.

Other films in this period turned away from politics to delve into the everyday lives of Muslim immigrants. These films tended to deemphasize religion while exploring cultural alienation and the difficulty of making a living. For example, *Man*

*Push Cart* (2005), by the Iranian-American director Ramin Bahrani, barely references the religious identity of a former Pakistani rock star (Ahmad Razvi) selling bagels from a street cart in NEW YORK CITY. In *The Visitor*, starring the Lebanese-American actor Haaz Sleiman, the characters' Muslim identity emerges in small details such as refusing to drink wine.

In the same period, a spate of documentaries introduced Americans to the history of Islam. *Mohammed: Legacy of a Prophet* (2002) was a PBS documentary that drew on a number of secular and religious scholars of Islam to present the life and influence of the Prophet. *Prince among Slaves* (2008), narrated by Mos Def, recounted the true story of ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (ca. 1762–1829), a Muslim-African prince sold into slavery in the American South. These documentaries suggested that Islam was not merely exotic and new in the United States but an essential part of the American experience for centuries.

Sonja Spear

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**finance** See ISLAMIC FINANCE.

### Fiqh Council of North America

The Fiqh Council of North America (FCNA) is a collection of 19 Muslim religious leaders and Islamic scholars that issues nonbinding legal opinions to Muslim Americans, adapting and interpreting Islamic LAW in its American context. In so doing, the FCNA seeks to provide America's Muslim community with a coherent *fiqh*, or interpretation of SHARI'AH, or Islamic law and ethics. After beginning as a branch of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA) in the 1960s, the council became an affiliate of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA in 1980. The FCNA has since assumed ever-greater importance as an arbiter of Muslim-American relations.

Members of the MSA first created a Fiqh Committee in the 1960s to determine the beginning and the end of the lunar month of Ramadan, during which Muslims observe dawn-to-dusk fasting. The committee met informally and did not extend its authority to other questions of Islamic law. When members of the MSA founded ISNA in 1980, the committee followed but remained largely unchanged. In March 1988, recognizing the increasingly complex legal needs of the Muslim-American community, the committee resolved "to create a larger and more authoritative body of Muslim scholars (ulama) to effectively confront the many legal issues facing Muslims in North America" and officially became the FCNA.

Since its inception, the FCNA has maintained a policy of joint meetings that allows councilors of varying specialties to pool their knowledge on a range of issues. The council has decided not to subscribe to any one school of legal interpretation, to use only the QUR'AN and the Sunna, or the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, as juridical sources, and to accept only questions submitted in writing and for which no clear rulings already exist. It has also outlined a set of criteria for membership. Prospective councilors must have five years of residence in North America, proficiency in English and Arabic, and a Ph.D. in Islamic studies, as well as the endorsement of three sitting members. Over the years, the FCNA's 12-member council and seven-member Executive Council, though dominated by Sunni immigrant men, have also included women, Shi'a, and African Americans.

Beginning in the 21st century, some prominent Muslim Americans have criticized the FCNA for ignoring meaningful issues. In October 2001, KHALED ABOU EL FADL, an activist and professor of law at the University of California, Los Angeles, told the *New York Times* that ordinary Muslims felt alienated from the council by its high-profile dealings with non-Muslim agencies, organizations, and journalists. In the same article, Yusuf Talal DeLorenzo, a former councilor, said the FCNA was "doing nothing" about crucial matters such as suicide attacks. The council explained that it did not have the budget to research complex problems adequately.

Despite these concerns, the FCNA has occasionally given important fatwas, or authoritative legal opinions, regarding controversial issues. In 2001, it joined the Islamic Institute, the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT, and the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences in approving stem-cell research performed on "spare" embryos. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, the council obtained a fatwa from five independent jurists permitting Muslims in the UNITED STATES MILITARY "to partake in the fighting in the upcoming battles, against whomever [sic] their country decides, has perpetrated terrorism against them"—including fellow Muslims. In 2005, the FCNA issued a fatwa "to reaffirm Islam's condemnation of terrorism and religious extremism," ruling that "it is the civic and religious duty of Muslims" to help the government protect civilian lives. More than 100 mosques and Muslim organizations seconded the decision, among them the Islamic Society of North America and the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS.

In addition to these high-profile rulings, the FCNA has offered prescriptions concerning the individual behavior of Muslim Americans. The council has considered questions ranging from wearing dreadlocks to the details of marriage contracts to the propriety of celebrating Christmas and Thanksgiving. In this way, the FCNA has helped Muslims shape an Islamic way of life in America's non-Muslim society.

William Brown

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**fiqh (jurisprudence)** See FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA; ISLAMIC THOUGHT; SHARI'A.

## Five Percenters

Originating in Harlem in the 1960s as an offshoot of the NATION OF ISLAM, the Five Percenters (also known as the Five Percent Nation, or Nation of Gods and Earths) have been recognized as extremely influential in urban culture, particularly HIP-HOP. The movement derives its name from a Nation of Islam text dividing society into three groups:

the “deaf, dumb, and blind,” who constitute 85 percent of the population; the “slavemakers of the poor,” making up 10 percent of society, who exploit and oppress the 85 percent through false religions; and the remaining 5 percent, the “poor righteous teachers” who reject the lies of the 10 percent and bring “knowledge of self” to the 85 percent.

### HISTORY

The Five Percenter’s founder, Clarence Edward Smith, was a decorated Korean War veteran who joined the Nation of Islam’s Harlem mosque in the early 1960s under its then-minister MALCOLM X. As the 13th man named Clarence to join the mosque and reject his “slave name,” Smith became known as CLARENCE 13X. He then underwent the Nation’s initiation process, memorizing the Supreme Wisdom Lessons, a series of transcribed dialogues between ELIJAH MUHAMMAD and his teacher, W. D. FARD. The Supreme Wisdom Lessons denounced worship of an unseen “mystery god” as the cause of slavery and inequality; it was the devil who pacified and controlled the masses through religious worship and hopes for a paradise in the hereafter. Because there was no mystery god, the lessons advised black men to see themselves as gods—with the title of “Allah” reserved for W. D. Fard, the “best knower”—while understanding the devil to be the white man.

While absorbed in study of the lessons, Clarence 13X would stray from standard readings of the text. To Clarence, the concept of black divinity contradicted the worship of W. D. Fard, whom the Nation portrayed as having mixed black-white parentage, as well as Elijah Muhammad’s special authority as “Messenger of Allah.” Clarence eventually found himself on the outs with the mosque, allegedly for behavioral infractions such as gambling and drug use. Clarence left the mosque, losing his “X” but continuing to study the lessons with other renegade Muslims in basement pool halls.

In the first half of 1964, Clarence appeared to waver between allegiance to the Nation of Islam and its apostate minister Malcolm X. Clarence respected Malcolm’s political urgency and might have seen Malcolm as a leader for Elijah Muhammad’s Muslims who had fallen out of favor with the Nation. Clarence was disappointed to learn that while traveling abroad, however, Malcolm had completely disowned Elijah Muhammad’s teachings in favor of what Malcolm called orthodox Islam. Describing his pilgrimage to Mecca, Malcolm would admit not only to praying to the “mystery god” but doing so with white Muslims whom he now viewed as brothers. After a brief period, the FBI, which was closely monitoring the Nation of Islam, believed that Clarence had joined Malcolm’s nascent Muslim Mosque, Inc., but it also observed him attending Nation of Islam events. By the end of 1964, Clarence had declared himself Allah and started his own faction.

Sharing the Nation of Islam’s guarded lessons with Harlem and Brooklyn youth, Allah, as he was now called not

only by his followers but also by the *New York Times*, New YORK CITY mayor John Lindsay, and others, would use clever wordplay to “break down” the lessons’ concepts. He demonstrated man’s divinity by breaking down his new name, Allah, as an acronym for “Arm, Leg, Leg, Arm, Head,” and *Islam* as “I Self Lord And Master.” Allah offered Elijah Muhammad’s racialized mythology, in which white people were genetically engineered devils, without the unappealing demands of membership in the Nation of Islam, such as prohibitions of music, dating, alcohol, and drugs. Allah taught his young disciples that wine was “wisdom,” that marijuana, or reefer, “referred” the mind, and cocaine made one “see,” and countered the Nation’s ban on gambling with a claim that shooting dice revealed the mathematical properties of the universe.

Shortly after the assassination of Malcolm X in February 1965, Allah led a handful of Five Percenter on a furious march through Harlem, starting at the ruins of the Nation of Islam’s Mosque No.7, where Malcolm had once been minister and which had been firebombed after his assassination, and culminating at the Hotel Theresa, former headquarters of Malcolm’s post-NOI organizations. Allah and some of his young followers were ultimately arrested after an alleged public disturbance. During his arraignment, Allah’s claims of divinity were considered a delusion of grandeur by the judge, who placed him in Bellevue Hospital for psychiatric evaluation. According to Five Percenter history, during this time the Nation of Islam ordered that anyone who knew the Supreme Wisdom Lessons should register with the mosque, causing Allah to declare that Five Percenter were not Muslims.

After several months at Bellevue, Allah was found “unable to understand the charges against him” and sent to Matteawan State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. Admitted as “Clarence Allah,” he would interpret the hospital’s use of his name as Allah as proof that the doctors accepted his teachings. While at Matteawan, Allah’s name was added to the Security Index maintained by FBI director J. Edgar Hoover to monitor (and when needed, take action against) perceived threats to national security. Allah, however, was sending positive messages to followers outside, encouraging them to do well in school and stay out of trouble. He also moved away from the Nation of Islam’s racial antagonism. After witnessing horrific abuse suffered by a white teen inmate at the hands of Matteawan guards, Allah took the youth under his wing and named him Azreal, after the Islamic angel of death. While teaching Azreal the origin of race as understood by the Nation of Islam, Allah assured Azreal that he was not a devil but a “righteous man.”

Released after nearly two years, Allah became an important community advocate who worked closely with New York City mayor John Lindsay to provide programs for Harlem youth and maintain urban peace as race riots swept the country in the late 1960s. Allah’s most notable accomplishments



following his Matteawan release were the acquiring of an Urban League street academy for his Five Percenters, and his march with Lindsay through the streets of Harlem following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968. While major riots ravaged cities such as Chicago and Baltimore, New York remained relatively free of damage, for which Allah was publicly recognized.

Allah's relationship with City Hall led to the Urban League's sponsoring a Five Percenter school as part of its "street academy" program. The academy, based in a small building given to the Five Percenters at a dollar-per-year lease, was intended to help Five Percenters finish high school and enter college. Meanwhile, Allah grew increasingly at odds with both the Nation of Islam and secular black nationalists who considered him an "Uncle Tom" and "sell-out" to City Hall. During interviews, Allah gave what were described as "free commercials for the Lindsay administration." Speaking at a boys' detention center, he expressed an extremely jingoistic attitude toward U.S. FOREIGN POLICY and the VIETNAM WAR, stating that the United States should kill anyone in Vietnam who "don't want to become civilized" and dismissing antiwar protesters as Soviet agents. Allah also supported the death penalty and the right of police officers to shoot without provocation.

Allah's evolving belief system also drifted further from its parent tradition, as he openly mocked Fard and declared his intentions to have Christmas parties for the Five Percenters. In what is considered the final step in Allah's break from the Nation of Islam, he instructed his Five Percenters to drop their "Muslim names" and create new ones; an early member, Karriem, changed his name to Black Messiah, and a youth named Al-Jabbar became Prince. Allah allowed Five Percenters to use his name as their surname, stressing the shared divinity of all black men.

In June 1969, Allah was assassinated in his estranged wife's apartment building. After initial speculation of a war between Five Percenters and the Nation of Islam, many of Allah's teen followers, devastated by the loss of their father figure, abandoned the movement. A dedicated core embarked on reviving the group in 1970, teaching the lessons to new crops of youths throughout New York. In the decade that followed, Five Percenters absorbed the entire memberships of various Brooklyn turf gangs into their ranks, causing police to classify them as a supergang.

Much of the Five Percenters' spread took place throughout New York State's prison system, where members continued to transmit the lessons even when it was believed that the community had gone defunct on the outside. Five Percenters were considered to be among the "major powers" behind the Attica Prison uprising in 1971, according to a state commission. Association with violence both in prisons and on the streets led prison authorities in numerous states to label the

Five Percenters a "security threat group" and barred members from holding meetings, reading community literature, or displaying their insignia.

### BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

While starting as an offshoot of the Nation of Islam, the Five Percenters have evolved as a distinct community with its own interpretations, particularly in the areas of religion, race, and gender, as well as its own practices.

Five Percenters generally avoid association with the religion of Islam, viewing "religion" strictly as dependence on unseen things, such as ghosts, spirits, and "mystery gods" whose existence cannot be proven. While this value has its root in the Nation of Islam's Supreme Wisdom Lessons, Five Percenters often accuse the Nation of contradicting its own text—particularly with narratives portraying Elijah Muhammad as alive and aboard the "Mothership." Five Percenters reject the Nation's reverence of W. D. Fard, who is commonly mocked as a "mystery god" in his own right, and deny the term "Muslim," since every black man is Allah and cannot "submit" to himself. Some Five Percenters, however, while still eschewing Islam as a "religion," claim to live Islam as a "culture" or "science."

There have been attempts by Five Percenters to conform the movement toward Islam, particularly LOUIS FARRAKHAN's Nation of Islam, emphasizing Elijah Muhammad as the foundation of the Five Percenter beliefs. Five Percenters counter that Clarence 13X left the mosque due to his superior understanding of what W. D. Fard had taught Elijah Muhammad, and that Clarence's claim to be Allah marks an irreversible break from the Nation. Some members of the movement have blended their Five Percenter beliefs with more traditional Islam. First Born Prince Allah, an elder of the community, became controversial among Five Percenters in the 1990s for his wearing *keffiyeh* headdresses, attending Friday prayers at Sunni mosques, and reciting the Qur'an in Arabic.

The Five Percenters also differ slightly from the Nation of Islam in their attitude toward race. While accepting the Nation's racial cosmology, in which a scientist named Yacub created white people as a race of devils, Five Percenters also repeat Allah's statement that he was neither "pro-black" nor "anti-white," while noting his friendships with white City Hall officials and Azreal, Allah's white disciple at Matteawan. There have been scattered accounts of white Five Percenters throughout the movement's history, employing a variety of readings of the Yacub myth. One branch of the Five Percenters has even taught that "reformed" white devils could call themselves gods, an extreme heresy to most Five Percenters.

The movement's discourse on gender alienates many women and has resulted in a high ratio of male-to-female members. Five Percenter "plus-lessons" have denounced the black woman as a tool of the devil against God, while stressing



the need for the black man to master her “sex powers.” Praise for women describes them as “secondary but most necessary.” While men use the surname Allah and refer to themselves as Gods, Earth is the title for women. Female Five Percenters are often depicted with both Earth and Moon imagery. As the Earth, she gives life while orbiting her Sun (the black man); as the Moon, she reflects the Sun’s light but cannot produce her own. Female Five Percenters have started to create their own interpretations and place within the community, however. Some have even claimed the title of “Goddess,” which, like white claimants to divinity, is generally seen as unacceptable.

Five Percenters do not offer prayers but hold a simple community meeting ritual, “parliament,” once every month. At a parliament, Five Percenters form a circle (“cipher”) and take turns addressing the group. The speaker uses the day’s date as a teaching tool, either by referring to the date’s corresponding “degree” in the Supreme Wisdom Lessons or by interpreting the date through the Five Percenters’ numerical system, Supreme Mathematics.

Developed by Allah and two contemporaries early in the movement, Supreme Mathematics attaches a specific attribute to each number from 0 to 9. Five Percenters “building” on the “day’s Mathematics” would expound on the date’s meaning as they see it. On the 14th day of the month, for example, a Five Percenter would look at 1 (Knowledge) and 4 (Culture), add them to get 5 (Power), and assess these relationships: If one has no Knowledge of his or her Culture, then he or she cannot have Power. Despite some interpretive norms, each Five Percenter has the freedom and authority to interpret the Mathematics as he or she sees fit, using the system as a tool to spark creativity and analytical thought. Allah also devised a second system, the Supreme Alphabets, similarly assigning attributes to letters of the alphabet.

### HIP-HOP

The Five Percenters are widely recognized for their immense contribution to the rise of hip-hop, through slang and concepts spread by the impressive roster of hip-hop stars claiming past or present allegiance to the movement.

Through the 1960s and 1970s, Five Percenter parliaments at public parks and basketball courts throughout New York City helped to establish the movement’s unique lingo and wordplay in the city’s youth culture. Unable to rely on titles such as priest, minister, or imam, each parliament speaker had to earn his own authority, through translogical arguments showing mastery of memorized lessons, dizzying wordplay, and the Supreme Mathematics and Alphabets. These performances often sparked cerebral confrontations in which Five Percenters would vie with one another for the crowd’s admiration. In the years that New York spawned hip-hop culture,

Five Percenter terminology was already entrenched as street slang, and the terms overheard at parliaments would enter into rap lyrics, such as “dropping” knowledge, science, and jewels. To praise something as “the bomb” goes back to Five Percenters verbally bombing each other with the lessons. Five Percenter phrases such as “word is bond,” originating from the Nation of Islam lessons, entered into mainstream hip-hop use, often finding new meanings: The greeting, “G,” short for “God” when used by Five Percenters, is now commonly read to mean “gangsta.”

Numerous classic hip-hop artists have claimed past or present affiliation with the Five Percenters, including Rakim, Busta Rhymes, Big Daddy Kane, Poor Righteous Teachers, World’s Famous Supreme Team, Brand Nubian, Lakim Shabazz, and the Wu-Tang Clan, sprinkling their lyrics with references to the movement. Five Percenter influence can also be heard in the work of nonmembers such as Nas, KRS-One, and Public Enemy’s Chuck D, who has broken down his group’s name as “Power Equality,” using Allah’s Supreme Alphabets.

*Michael Muhammad Knight*

### Further Reading

- Knight, Michael Muhammad. *The Five Percenters: Islam, Hip-hop and the Gods of New York*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2007.
- Nuruddin, Yusuf. “The Five Percenters: A Teenage Nation of Gods and Earths.” In *Muslim Communities in North America*, edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Jane Idleman Smith, 109–132. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.

### Nation of Gods and Earths “What We Teach” and “Supreme Mathematics” (1992)

*The Nation of Gods and Earths, also known as the Five Percenters, is a predominantly black American group with historical ties to the Nation of Islam. Begun in 1960s New York by Clarence 13X, who renamed himself “Allah,” the Five Percenters have often rejected the notion that they followed the religion of Islam. Five Percenter doctrines were not derived from the Qur’an or the Sunna, the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. Instead, this new religious movement had its own founder, sacred texts, and rituals, and it became widely influential in popular culture. Five Percenter influences dominated the work of many hip-hop artists in the late 20th century. For hip-hop artists and members of the Five Percenter Nation, human language was not merely a form of communication; language contained power that could be unlocked by those who possessed the necessary wisdom. “Breaking down” the meaning of language often began by analyzing each letter in a single word according to a cipher, like the one reproduced below. Like language, numbers were also believed to be inherently powerful, and numerology, the study of the spiritual and secret meaning of*

numbers, became central to Five Percenter culture. Improvising on the "Supreme Mathematics," a secret catechism originally taught in the Nation of Islam, Five Percenters could encode their own meanings into common sets of numbers or interpret the meaning of numbers they encountered in everyday life. In addition to reprinting two of the ciphers used by Five Percenters in the 1990s, the excerpts below from *The Word*, a Five Percenter newspaper, in 1992 include a statement of basic Five Percenter beliefs.



### What We Teach

1. We teach that black people are the original people of the planet earth.
2. We teach that black people are fathers and mothers of civilization.
3. We teach that the science of supreme mathematics is the key to understanding man's relationship to the universe.
4. We teach Islam as a natural way of life; not a religion.
5. We teach that education should be fashioned to enable us to be self sufficient as a people.
6. We teach that each one should teach one according to their knowledge.
7. We teach that the Blackman is God and His proper name is Allah: Arm, Leg, Leg, Arm, Head.
8. We teach that our children are our link to the future and they must be nurtured, respected, loved, protected and educated.
9. We teach that the unified black family is the vital building block of the Nation.

### Supreme Mathematics

Allah (The Father) taught me never to write the Supreme Mathematics or the Supreme Alphabets down on paper, that this language should be taught by word of mouth, however, he also taught us "that as time change you must change, or you are gonna die." And so out of necessity and to meet the challenge to rectify this crisis that we are faced with, it is now necessary for this Knowledge and Wisdom to be written to bring those who are in search of the true Knowledge of Allah and the Wisdom of our language into the pure light of Allah and his original teachings as revealed to me.

The original Supreme Mathematics as given and taught to me by Allah is as follows:

- 1 = Knowledge
- 2 = Wisdom
- 3 = Understanding
- 4 = Culture or Freedom
- 5 = Power, Justice or Refinement
- 6 = Equality
- 7 = God (Allah)
- 8 = Build or Destroy
- 9 = Born
- 0 = Cipher

The original Supreme Alphabets as given and taught to me by Allah is as follows:

- A = Allah
- B = Be or Born
- C = See
- D = Divine or Destroy
- E = Equality or Evil
- F = Father
- G = God
- H = He or Her
- I = I
- J = Justice
- K = King
- L = Love
- M = Master
- N = in or now
- O = Cipher
- P = Power
- Q = Queen
- R = Rule or Right
- S = Savior or Self
- T = Truth or Square
- U = You
- V = Victory
- W = Wisdom
- X = Unknown
- Y = Why
- Z = Zig, Zag, Zig (meaning understanding)

As it was in the beginning so shall it be in the end.



Source: Nation of Gods and Earths. "What We Teach" and "Supreme Mathematics," from *The Word* 2, no. 1 (June 1992): 1, 3, 6, and 2; no. 3 (November/December 1992): n. p.

**Five Pillars of Islam** See ISLAMIC THOUGHT; RELIGIOUS LIFE; SHARI'AH.

## food

Though Muslims in U.S. history have generally shared an aversion to pork, Muslim-American food preferences have often shared little else in common. What Muslim Americans eat reflects their particular ethnic origin, class background, and personal tastes as much as religious affiliation. American Muslims are a microcosm of the Islamic world, and, as such, they have prepared and consumed the cuisines of Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, and the Americas—everything from rice cakes to cheeseburgers. The preparation and consumption of food can be a mundane activity, a sacred act, or both. The history of food among Muslim Americans reveals the diversity of the community and its deep roots in U.S. history.

### AFRICAN MUSLIMS IN AMERICA

Most of the first Muslims in the British and Spanish colonies of North America were black slaves who traced their ethnic roots to West Africa. Some of them were familiar with the rules governing the preparation of food outlined in the *shari'a*, or the Islamic law and ethics. These rules, generally shared by all Muslims who observe the *shari'a*, explain what foods are *halal*, or permissible, and what foods are *haram*, or forbidden. Meat slaughtered according to these rules is called *zabiha*.

One slave who followed the *shari'a* rules governing food whenever possible was Hyuba, Boon Salumena Jallo, who became known as Job Ben Solomon, a highly educated Muslim who could read and write in Arabic. Enslaved around 1730 in the eastern part of what is now the African nation of Senegal, Hyuba was one of the rare slaves in North America who actually returned to Africa a free man. On his voyage back across the Atlantic in 1733, Hyuba insisted on butchering his own meat and reportedly went hungry rather than eat pork.

Most Muslim slaves were not as lucky as Ayuba. The typical slave diet in North America included large amounts of pork, especially chitterlings, the small intestines and other parts of the pig that white people found undesirable. At times, chitterlings (also known as chitlins) would account for much of a slave's available protein. Muslim slaves familiar with the *shari'a* would have known that, in the absence of other food sources, it was their duty to eat whatever was available, including food that would have been taboo under normal circumstances.

In places and times where slaves were permitted to plant their own gardens and keep their own livestock, they would often prepare African-inspired foods. On the relatively isolated Sea Islands off the coast of Georgia, some of these culinary traditions reflected the strong influence of West African Muslim cultures, including the annual festival of *sadaka* or *saraka*, celebrated in West Africa to commemorate ancestors, offer thanks, or ask for help.

One Sea Island resident, Katie Brown, told historians in the 1930s that every year around the same time her grandmother would make "funny flat cake she call 'saraka.'" The recipe, a variation on West African cooking, involved soaking rice in water overnight then pounding the swollen, softened rice in a wooden mortar with a pestle until it turned into paste. Brown's grandmother would add honey and sometimes sugar and form the paste into flat cakes. "She make them same day every year," recalled Brown, "and it a big day. When they finish, she call us in, all the children, and put in hands little flat cake. And we eats it." Another woman would offer a blessing on the cakes by saying, "Ameen, Ameen, Ameen," the Arabic word for Amen, before eating them.

### MIDDLE EASTERN IMMIGRANT FOODS

The majority of Arabic-speaking immigrants who first came to the United States from 1880 to WORLD WAR I (1914–18) were Syrian-Lebanese Christians. But thousands of Muslims also arrived in this cohort of immigrants. Many of these Muslims, like the Christians, settled in DETROIT, MICHIGAN; BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS; CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA; and CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. Though Syrian-Lebanese Christians and Muslims shared many of the same culinary traditions, the meaning and functions of this cuisine differed for Muslims who prepared their food according to Islamic dietary rules and used it in their religious holidays.

In ROSS, NORTH DAKOTA, Syrian-American Muslim Mike Abdallah told Everal McKinnon, a man who collected the oral histories of several Dakotan Muslims in the 1930s, that Syrians had a particular way of butchering meat: "We believe that an animal should not be shot or hit in the head to kill it," Abdallah said. "It should be bled to death. We think that when an animal is shot or hit in the head, the evil and sins remain in the meat and it is a sin to eat this meat."

Wherever Arabic-speaking persons immigrated, they brought their Middle Eastern cuisine with them. But they also quickly adjusted their recipes, incorporating ingredients that were available in the United States and adding dishes they learned from their non-Arab neighbors. The dinner that Mike Abdallah served Everal McKinnon one evening in 1939 showed that Abdallah's Arab-American cuisine reflected multiple culinary influences. McKinnon feasted on well-seasoned chicken, potatoes, and other vegetables simmered in a tomato broth, a platter of fried potatoes, homemade cheese made from sweet milk, and Syrian bread—which McKinnon compared to Norwegian *lefse*. After dinner, he had cookies, cake with plum sauce, and green tea.

Ross's Muslims, who built a mosque on the prairie, also fasted from dawn to dusk during the month of Ramadan. Mary Juma, who arrived with her husband in Canada around 1900 and then in North Dakota in 1902, told McKinnon that

after the month of Ramadan, community members visited each other's homes and feasted together.

In 20th-century Detroit, restaurants served Arabs and non-Arabs alike, helping to create a menu of items that eventually became standard in many Middle Eastern restaurants. Dishes like hummus, or chickpea dip; tabouli, or parsley salad; and falafel would become part of the American dietary lexicon more generally. At first, Detroit's groceries, pastry shops, and restaurants were dominated by the Syrian-Lebanese immigrants who had settled there. But after WORLD WAR II and in the wake of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, a period during which many more first-generation Arab Americans came to settle in the Detroit area, the Arab-American food industry there came to express many other national and ethnic cuisines, especially those of Palestinians, Yemenis, and Iraqis.

By the year 2000, a typical *iftar*, the nightly meal in which families break their daylong fasts during Ramadan, expressed these different ethnic traditions of Arab Detroit. At a Lebanese Muslim household, the *iftar* might include a mixed salad of lettuce, tomato, parsley, and sumac; eggplant dip; chickpea dip; French fries; a dish of ground raw beef with bulgur wheat; and Pepsi. At a Yemeni-American household, the meal might feature a creamy yogurt dish with bread, garlic, hot peppers, and cumin, a fried triangle of rice paper stuffed with lamb and onion, a separate lamb dish with rice and potatoes, a green salad, various types of flour-based starch dishes, and custard with fruit.

The Thanksgiving meal, celebrated by most Muslim Americans as a sign of their proud identification with the United States, generally combined these dishes with turkey, dressing, and various gelatin salads.

#### AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM TRADITIONS

AS AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS created independent Muslim communities in the 1920s, they also began to fashion a distinctive African-American Muslim food culture. No organization was more important to the emergence of this culinary milieu than the NATION OF ISLAM. Begun in 1930, this organization converted thousands of African Americans to its admittedly unorthodox version of Islamic religion after World War II. Preaching economic, cultural, political, and religious independence from white Americans, Nation of Islam leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD also directed his followers to observe a complicated set of dietary rules.

In addition to banning pork and alcohol, Elijah Muhammad instructed his followers not to eat lima beans, butter beans, black-eyed peas, green cabbage, collard greens, pinto beans, kidney beans, brown field beans, cornbread, carp, catfish, crustaceans, mollusks, rabbit, opossum, squirrel, and raccoon. In short, he told them not to eat "soul food," which Muhammad associated with the "uncivilized" culture

of slaves. In his two-volume work, *How to Eat to Live* (1972), Muhammad advised his followers to eat limited amounts of red meat, eliminate the consumption of processed foods with too many additives, eat only once a day, and avoid starches, especially bleached flour. Instead, he taught, they should eat fish, poultry, whole wheat products, and various vegetables.

The food culture of the Nation of Islam gave birth to dozens of food-related businesses in inner cities across the United States, as various bakeries, groceries, and restaurants were established near Nation of Islam mosques and in cities with significant African-American Muslim populations. Muhammad also purchased several farms, selling produce and livestock to Nation of Islam members and the general public. In the 1970s, the Nation of Islam also ran a multi-million dollar fish import business, sustained by a national distribution network of African-American Muslims.

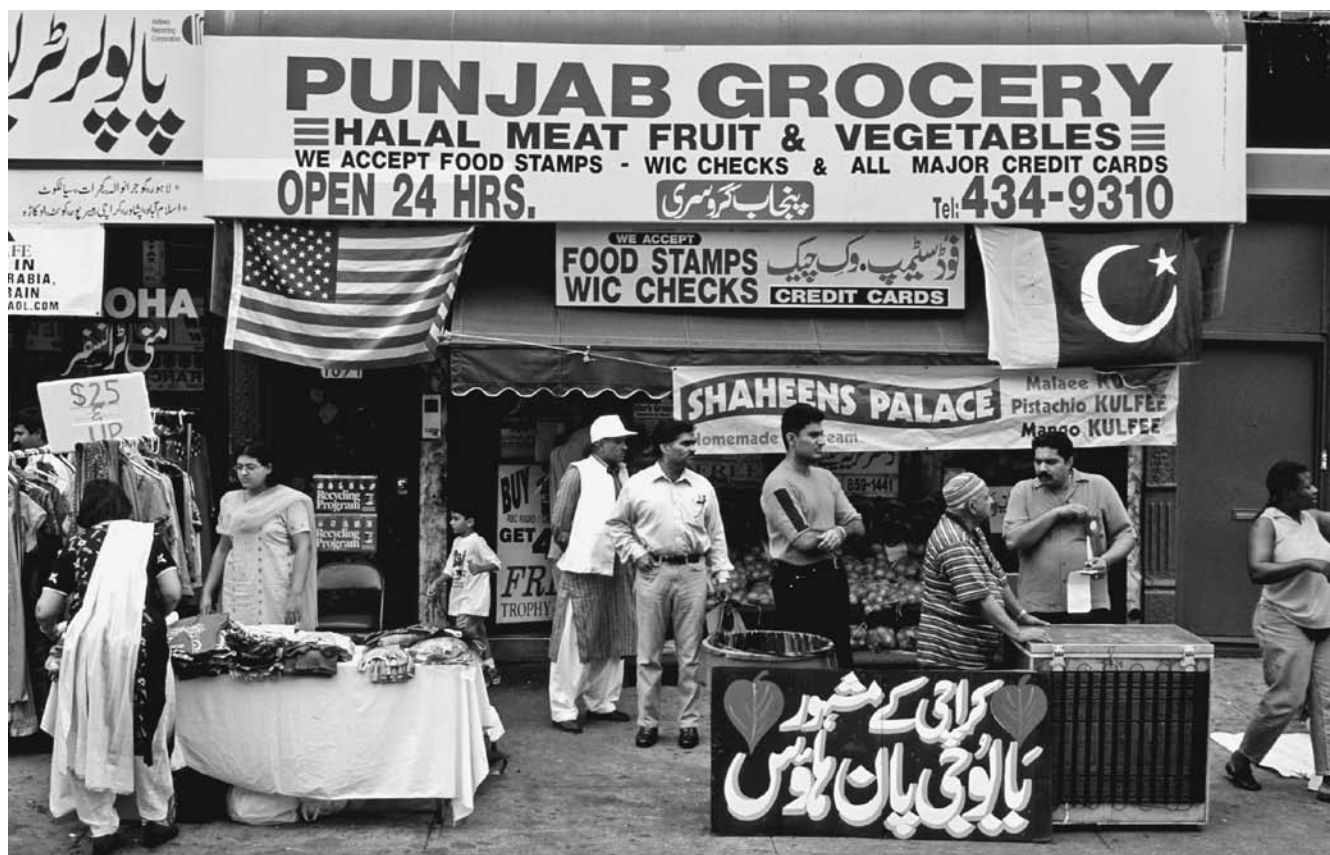
If there is one dish most associated with the food culture of the Nation of Islam, it is the bean pie, often sold by members of the Nation of Islam to the general public through bakeries or as part of fund-raising campaigns. Though there are many competing recipes for the best bean pie, a Muslim bean pie often includes cooked navy beans, sugar, eggs, a little flour, evaporated milk, butter, nutmeg, cinnamon, and vanilla. In the 1960s and 1970s, some bakers used whole wheat flour and brown sugar, trying to follow Muhammad's dietary guidelines. These healthier versions of the pie were generally less popular than those made with white sugar and lots of fat.

While the Nation of Islam played a pivotal role in crafting a distinct culture of food among African-American Muslims from World War II to the 1970s, many African-American Muslims who had no association with the Nation of Islam shared a similar concern for cultivating a healthy diet. Good food was seen as essential to the health of the body and the soul. Former members of the Nation of Islam who became Sunni Muslims under the leadership of W. D. MOHAMMED in the 1970s eventually questioned Elijah Muhammad's criticism of soul food. During one 1990s Eid al-Fitr celebration, the feast marking the end of Ramadan, anthropologist Carolyn Moxley Rouse observed a group of African-American Sunni Muslim women in Los Angeles preparing "macaroni and cheese, collard greens, fried chicken, potatoes, okra, curried lamb, cornbread, black-eyed peas, hot links, [and] beef kabobs." For these women, said Rouse, "to cook [soul food] was an expression of religious duty, love of community, and love of Allah."

#### MULTICULTURAL MUSLIM-AMERICAN FOOD PRACTICES

The fact that African-American Muslim soul food included curried lamb by the 1990s reveals a larger trend in Muslim-American food culture. "Curry" refers to the South Asian





Grocery stores, restaurants, and other food suppliers, such as the Punjab Grocery in New York City, cater to a growing consumer market that prefers halal, or religiously permissible, food in the late 20th century. (David Grossman/Alamy)

practice of combining various spices such as cumin, turmeric, and cayenne pepper in a flavorful sauce. The first curries consumed in Muslim America were likely prepared in the late 19th century by Punjabi agricultural workers in southern California and Bengali Muslim sailors who jumped ship in New Orleans and New York. In 1946, South Asian-American Habib Ullah opened one of the first Indian restaurants in Harlem, New York. Married to a Puerto Rican woman, Ullah catered parties that combined Indian food and salsa music. He also shopped the stores of Spanish Harlem's La Marqueta to find the right ingredients for his own special curry.

After the Immigration Act of 1965, hundreds of thousands of Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis—many of them Muslim—immigrated to the United States, bringing the diverse culinary traditions of South Asia with them. Wherever they moved, South Asian entrepreneurs of various faiths opened “Indian” restaurants, and like Arab-American establishments, these restaurants offered increasingly standardized fare, often emphasizing the Mughal, or northern Indian, dishes over others. Among the most popular dishes that many non-Indians came to associate with Indian food more generally were biryani, saffron rice often served with

meat; samosas, or deep-fried turnovers stuffed with potato and other ingredients; and tandoori chicken or lamb—South Asian “barbecue” cooked in a cylindrical clay oven heated by charcoal.

Some indigenous Muslim Americans, especially African-American Muslims, included such dishes and the foods of other Muslim immigrants in their everyday cooking at home. By 2000, the creation of a genuinely cross-cultural Muslim-American cuisine, consciously reflecting the ethnic diversity of the community, had begun in earnest. For example, *AZIZAH*, a Muslim-American women's magazine, created a regular feature on Muslim-American cooking. A 2001 issue featured various rice dishes such as Arab upside-down rice, Spanish paella, sweet brown rice cakes, and “California rice.” Another issue explained how to bake Yemeni bread, Pakistani roti, and wheat germ bread. The June 2004 issue of *Azizah* featured recipes of African-American Muslim chef Quiana Sabirah Taylor, who graduated from the Lake Washington Technical College with a degree in culinary arts. Chef Taylor's final exam dinner, called “A Taste of Africa,” was a pan-African feast that observed all Islamic dietary traditions, including the ban

on pork and the rules governing the slaughter of meat. She served her guests stewed greens, chicken peanut butter soup, yam and green banana, garlic and ginger dressing, chicken stuffed with couscous, and a chicken tagine with olives and lemons.

During this period, the food consumed by Muslim Americans became even more diverse as immigrants arrived from nearly every part of the globe. BOSNIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, Cham-American Muslims, East African-American Muslims, West African-American Muslims, and others started restaurants in ethnic enclaves across the urban and suburban landscapes of the United States.

### FOOD AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

Another trend with roots in the 1970s and 1980s was the national proliferation of halal markets, restaurants, and other food suppliers. Islamic REVIVALISM called on Muslims to observe the ethical guidelines set forth in the Qur'an and the SUNNA, or the traditions of the prophet MUHAMMAD, and Muslim Americans focused on the preparation and consumption of food as one of the primary identity markers of religious observance. Publications funded by various Muslim organizations and mosques gave Muslim consumers guidance on the permissibility of popular products in American grocery stores. Various governing bodies attempted to certify whether or not certain food products and suppliers were halal. The Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America, for example, developed a formal halal certification process, published a halal consumer magazine, and sponsored halal food conferences. Based in Chicago, Illinois, this nonprofit organization began an extensive Web site in 1998 that offered advice on hundreds of consumer products from around the world.

As the INTERNET emerged as a central space for discussion, debate, and learning among Muslim Americans and others, various sites devoted to food appeared. Zabiha.com became an open-source site for consumer reviews of various restaurants and markets around the world. In addition to rating their adherence to Islamic dietary norms, user reviews included information on the quality and price of the food and the cleanliness of the establishment. Mobile phone users could search Zabiha.com reviews and download driving directions en route to a café. Many Muslim Americans, especially those who utilized new information and communication technologies, were engaging in a national and international conversation about the meaning of food in their religious and communal life.

Though some Muslims were extremely strict in their observation of dietary norms, others sought a compromise between Islamic ideals and American realities. Some Muslim Americans would eat only at Muslim restaurants and buy groceries exclusively from Muslim markets, and their num-

ber increased during the final decades of the 20th century. In some neighborhoods where Jewish Americans had established delicatessens and markets, Muslims purchased foods that were prepared according to kosher guidelines, the dietary practices followed by many observant Jews. In other places with a sizable population of Muslim Americans, even fast-food restaurants began to offer halal food. Muslim-owned Subway chain sandwich shops in New Jersey and California earned sales volume awards for doing so. Other Muslims observed the rules at home but ignored them when eating out, especially when zabiha meat was not available. One college student reported that he broke his Ramadan fast one night by stopping at the local Taco Bell drive-through to pick up a few gorditas.

Food also continued to play a large role in the two main Muslim holidays of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha and in other important rites of passage such as weddings and graduation celebrations. Many Muslim Americans, like Muslims elsewhere, considered the month of Ramadan to be an auspicious time for donating money and food to needy people at home and abroad. In 2003, the Islamic Society of Stanford University held a "fast-a-thon" to raise money for a San Jose, California, food distribution charity. In 2006, 350 Muslim volunteers provided food, water, toys, and personal hygiene items to homeless people in Roxbury, Massachusetts. For Muslims devoted to charitable giving, food was not only a boundary marking the difference between Muslim and non-Muslims; it was also a gift to be shared with those who did not have enough of it, whether Muslim or not.

By the beginning of the 21st century, many religiously observant Muslim Americans had begun to nurture a common and nationwide Muslim-American food culture. The cuisines that they consumed continued to reflect their ethnic and racial diversity, though Muslim Americans were also influencing one another's food choices across lines of race and ethnicity. Increasingly, non-Muslim Americans enjoyed the various foods introduced by Muslims to the United States. Of course, none of these cuisines was exclusively Muslim. But soul food, Middle Eastern cuisine, and Indian delicacies, among others, reflected the culinary energy and knowledge of Muslim Americans, and these foods have made an indelible mark on the history of American food as a whole.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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### Fruit of Islam

The Fruit of Islam (FOI) was the male paramilitary branch of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) that exemplified proper conduct for Muslim men. According to the traditions of the organization, NOI founder W. D. FARD created the FOI in the early 1930s to serve as its "moral right arm." The FOI operated both nationally and locally; national headquarters were located in CHICAGO, while local branches were attached to each temple. Members were required to wear the official uniform, typically a dark suit with a bow tie, or military-inspired dress with a fez. The FOI were trained in military protocol and physical combat and were educated about their duties as husbands, fathers, and community leaders.

The main tasks of the FOI were security, newspaper sales, and recruitment. The FOI provided security for all NOI events and for NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD. All men who entered a NOI temple were searched by the FOI; prohibited objects like weapons, cigarettes, and alcohol were confiscated. After the search, FOI members escorted visitors to their seats. During sermons, two guards stood on either side of the minister.



Members of the Fruit of Islam keep watch at the Millions More March on October 15, 2005. The event commemorated the 10th anniversary of the Million Man March. (Kamenko/PAJIC/UPI/Landov)



Muhammad's public appearances required even more security. These procedures included inspecting his travel route from airport to temple, stationing guards along the travel route, driving special cars on either side of his vehicle, preparing for emergencies, and escorting him with an elite force. The second main task of the FOI was selling *Muhammad Speaks*, the official newspaper of the NOI. Each member had a weekly sales quota he was expected to meet by selling door-to-door or on busy streets. Selling newspapers also provided an opportunity for recruiting new members, a missionary activity that the NOI called "fishing." In addition to using the newspaper as a recruiting tool, some FOI members went fishing in prisons, where thousands eventually converted.

During the height of the NOI in the 1950s and 1960s, Raymond Sharrieff served as the supreme captain of the FOI. Sharrieff was also the son-in-law of Elijah Muhammad, having married Muhammad's daughter Ethel and undoubtedly stood as one of the most influential and powerful members of the NOI. Many expected Sharrieff to succeed Elijah Muhammad as national leader of the NOI. In 1975, however, W. D. MOHAMMED emerged as the leader of the movement.

In the latter half of the 1970s, W. D. Mohammed dismantled the FOI. Mohammed, who began his career as a lieutenant in the FOI, argued that it no longer exemplified moral conduct but had descended into a "hooligan outfit, a hoodlum outfit." But Mohammed likely had other motivations for abolishing the FOI. He may have wanted to prevent a possible revolt against his new leadership, since the FOI had accumulated much power in the previous decades, and Mohammed feared it might turn against him. LOUIS FARRAKHAN, who also began his career as a lieutenant in the FOI, rejected the leadership and reforms of Mohammed. In 1977, he established a new version of the NOI and revived the FOI to its central place in the organization.

Long an important part of the NOI, the FOI has recently extended its influence beyond the organization. The FOI has inspired the formation of other African-American private security forces. The FOI has also been employed as a private security force for non-Muslims, the most notable examples being Reverend Jesse Jackson and filmmaker Spike Lee.

Caitlin Yoshiko Buysse

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### Fulwood v. Clemmer

In 1962, the Federal District Court for the District of Columbia ruled in *Fulwood v. Clemmer* that Muslims imprisoned in the United States possessed basic rights to practice their religion. This case was among a handful in the early 1960s that ultimately recognized Islam as a legitimate religion and mandated equal protection for religious rights of Muslims, including those in prison.

William T. X. Fulwood, a member of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), had been imprisoned at Lorton Reformatory in 1959 in Lorton, Virginia, and was moved to the District of Columbia Jail in 1960. In 1962, Fulwood filed a lawsuit against the director of the department of corrections, Donald Clemmer, and others, alleging he had suffered religious discrimination.

In the Lorton Reformatory, Fulwood and other Muslim inmates had made several formal requests for permission to hold religious services, but they were repeatedly denied. Fulwood was also prevented from wearing and carrying a religious medal, though inmates of other faiths were allowed to have similar items, such as crosses and Stars of David. The Department of Corrections argued that these restrictions were based on the premise that the NOI promoted racial hatred, and therefore meetings of Muslims and visual representations of NOI ideology could be potentially disruptive of prison safety. Fulwood challenged this claim, arguing that the NOI was a genuine religion and that he had a right to practice it.

In its ruling, the District Court observed that the prison sponsored many religious activities, allowing gatherings for Catholics, Jews, and numerous groups of Protestants. It paid for religious leaders to come in, not only to lead services, but to conduct special rites, teach classes, and counsel individuals. The prison also allotted funds to pay for religious medals given to inmates who attended religious programs. Thus, the court concluded that the prison's rules preventing one specific religious group from meeting and its restrictions on religious medals were arbitrary and clearly discriminatory.

Fulwood also claimed that he had been kept in prolonged solitary confinement. The situation originated in an incident at the Lorton facility when, one afternoon during recreation time, Fulwood stood on the bleachers and preached about Nation of Islam beliefs. Prison officials became concerned about his leadership position and potential authority among Muslim inmates. This led to his confinement in a control cell at Lorton, and,



once he was transferred to the District jail, to various forms of restricted confinement in that facility. The court ruled that this punishment had been unreasonable and disproportionate to the offense, and ordered him back into the general population, where he would be allowed regular prison privileges.

The court did not find in Fulwood's favor on all points. Fulwood had tried to send letters to ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, the leader of the Nation of Islam. While contact between prisoners and ministers was generally permitted, Fulwood was told by prison officials that since he did not know Muhammad personally, this did not meet the guidelines for a ministerial contact; thus his letters were discarded. Fulwood was also not permitted to receive the *Herald Dispatch*, a newspaper in which Muhammad wrote a regular column, because prison authorities said the articles incited racial tension. Fulwood argued that these practices, too, demonstrated discrimination based on his religion; however, the court found that Fulwood did not prove a clear burden in these instances.

While Fulwood was not entirely satisfied by the court's decisions, his lawsuit was an important judicial marker in the struggle for religious equality for Muslims in the United States. Though prison officials tried to treat Muslim prisoners as a political force, the courts recognized them as individuals with religious rights that are protected, even when imprisoned.

Marie W. Dallam

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**fundamentalism** See REVIVALISM.

### funerals

There are multiple forms and interpretations of Muslim funeral rituals and burial practices in the United States, due to the diverse religious, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds of Muslim Americans. Because state and local laws governing death certificates, care of the deceased, embalming, and casket requirements were not written with Muslims in mind, there have been various conflicts between them and Muslim funerary rituals. As a result, Muslim families have been forced at times to alter substantially their religious or cultural practices for burying their deceased. At the same time, state and local laws have gradually changed to accommodate alternate traditions, including those of Muslims.

For many Muslim Americans, the rituals surrounding death include reciting QUR'AN, saying prayers to ease the fear of death and judgment, and encouraging the dying person to recite the Islamic profession of faith: "I believe that there is no God but God and that Muhammad is His Messenger." The dying person's mouth may be moistened and his or her face turned toward Mecca, and he or she is generally surrounded by family and coaxed to remember his or her faith. Individuals too weak to pray may signal their presence and intent by lifting an index finger.

When death has occurred, the eyes and mouth are closed and the arms and legs straightened. The extended family and community are notified as soon as possible, because, according to most interpretations of the SHARI'A, or Islamic law and ethics, the funeral should take place within 24 hours of death. Muslims do not typically embalm the dead, and an autopsy is conducted only when legally mandated. The body is ritually washed and shrouded in plain white cloth made for this purpose.

### COLONIAL AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY BURIALS

Interviews conducted with former slaves and their descendants before WORLD WAR II shed light on the religious practices of the Muslims of the Sea Islands, located along South Carolina and GEORGIA SEACOAST. In the early slave communities of the Sea Islands, funeral practices reflected many West African cultural traditions shared by practitioners of Islam, Christianity, and African traditional religions. For example, funerals often included the performance of religious ring dancing, also called ring shout. Drumming was employed to alert the community that someone had died and to accompany mourners in the processions to the gravesite. Mourners joined hands, sometimes singing or praying as they circled the graves. The dead were buried with feet facing east and head oriented east toward Mecca and Africa.

In 1991, an African burial ground was rediscovered in NEW YORK CITY, as archaeologists cleared the site for a new federal building. Though the team expected to find about 50 graves, more than 400 graves from the colonial period were unearthed. Documents from the period show that the municipal government had a standing policy of minimal interference with the funeral practices carried out there, though regulations were later passed dictating no more than 12 mourners could attend. An after-dark curfew was also enforced, since funeral rituals were viewed by colonial officials as potentially subversive.

Many of the graves of women and children contained blue beads of African origin, sometimes on strings encircling the waist. The beads may be markers of Muslim practice, because blue beads were frequently used as talismans in Muslim societies. Some scholars have argued that this is difficult to prove because the beads were also used by other

African ethnic and religious groups. The bodies were virtually all oriented east-west, indicating either a Christian or a Muslim burial. In roughly one-quarter of the graves examined so far, the bodies were shrouded, also indicating that the deceased may have been Muslims. The site was officially designated a landmark by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission on February 25, 1993. Archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians continue to piece evidence from this site and others to understand better the lives of the earliest Muslim Americans and to give voice to their stories.

#### TWENTIETH-CENTURY FUNERALS

As Muslim immigrants arrived in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries from what was then the Ottoman Empire, mainly from what are now Turkey, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, they brought their religious and cultural traditions with them and created organizations to support community needs. Two different charitable societies existed in early 20th-century DETROIT: the Kizilay, or the Turkish Red Cross, and the Turkish Orphan's Association. Each of the societies owned burial plots in local cemeteries and offered assistance with funeral services.

A Sudanese Sunni Muslim, Sait Mahcit, founded the funeral association connected with Kizilay in 1920. Members paid a yearly fee of \$2, and in return they were assured a proper Muslim burial when they died. A similar association was organized through what was by then called the Turkish Orphans Society in 1938. The organizations purchased graves, rented chairs and tents, and made arrangements with community funeral directors. These associations were primarily for unmarried male immigrants, living far from the family members who normally attended to these details; therefore, those with families did not join. HUSSEIN KAROUB (1892–1973), an Ottoman Sunni Muslim religious leader, routinely officiated at funerals and joined families to mourn together on commemoration dinners held 40 days and one year after the death.

Outside of BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, Sweeney's Funeral Home, founded in 1917 to serve the Irish-Catholic community, arranged a funeral service in 1939 for Muslim-American Joseph Hassan, prompting the beginning of the funeral home's relationship with the local Muslim community. Dennis Sweeney, owner of the funeral home, was a friend of Mohamed Omar, a Lebanese immigrant who served as a leader of the small Muslim community in Quincy. Omar came to the funeral home to wash the body and to read QUR'AN. The Sweeney Funeral Home's relationship continued into the early 21st century, when it conducted an average of a dozen services per year. Catering to their Muslim clients, they provide a special washing room so bodies can be prepared in accordance with Muslim practice.

Not all early 20th-century Muslim Americans followed Sunni and Shi'a funerary traditions. Some AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS created new Muslim funeral rituals suited to their particular Muslim groups, often reflecting elements of African-American vernacular and religious traditions. At the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE OF AMERICA, founded in 1925 by NOBLE DREW ALI (1886–1929), in CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, funeral services were conducted in the same manner as were the group's Friday worship services. The service began with readings from the *Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple* (1927) and the Divine Laws of the Noble Prophet Ali, and was followed by a series of short sermons by community members and a warning from the prophet. The service ended with a group recitation of the Moorish-American prayer, which is repeated at the gravesite. The prayer praises Allah and the prophet Noble Drew Ali. When Ali died in 1929, news of his death was reported on the front page of the *Chicago Defender* newspaper. The paper ran a photograph of his funeral cortege, taken as the group processed through the streets of the South Side of Chicago from the temple to the Burr Oak cemetery. Many of the hundreds of mourners wore caftans and fezzes, a style of dress adopted by the group.

Other African Americans combined black American funerary traditions with Sunni Islamic traditions, as seen in the funeral of MALCOLM X (1925–65), following his assassination in 1965. Dressed in a Western-style suit rather than in a white shroud, his body was laid out for viewing for four days at New York City's Unity Funeral Home—breaking with the tradition of burying the body within 24 hours. After the viewing, his body was ritually washed and shrouded for a Muslim service at Faith Temple Church of God in Christ in Harlem. The delay in burial was attributed to the fact many of his supporters, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, wanted the opportunity to mourn him. In addition, his family encountered great difficulty in finding a site for the funeral service, because they feared that those who had assassinated Malcolm would cause further violence at this funeral.

As a concession to the mourners, many of whom were not Muslims, his face was left exposed and the coffin open for final viewing. His widow, Betty Shabazz, ordered flowers, which are usually not present at Muslim funerals, but had them decorated with a white star and crescent, a distinct marker of Islam. The nameplate on his coffin was his Islamic name, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. Videos of the funeral show some mourners crossing themselves as they pay their final respects. At the burial in Ferncliff Cemetery in Hartsdale, New York, close friends took shovels from the cemetery workers, preferring to cover the coffin as a community of mourners, in accordance with a Muslim tradition.

### LATE TWENTIETH-CENTURY FUNERALS

In addition to Sunni, Shi'a, and Moorish Science Temple funerary traditions, Muslim Americans in the late 20th century began to practice traditions related to Sufism, the mystical and pietistic branch of Islam. When Sufi teacher M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen died in 1986, he was buried at the community's farm in Unionville, Pennsylvania. The *mazar*, or tomb, of Muhaiyaddeen was perhaps the first Sufi shrine built in the United States. Resembling the other tombs of Muslim saints, especially those found across North Africa, this burial place has become a site of *ziyara*, or religious pilgrimage, for those seeking a place to meditate, pray, or ask the saint's intervention with God on their behalf.

As the number of MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS proliferated in the late 20th century, they increasingly offered funeral and burial services to their members, either on their own or in partnership with existing funeral homes and CEMETERIES. By the turn of the 21st century in Columbus, Ohio,

for example, the Islamic Foundation provided the services of washing, shrouding, and praying for the deceased either for free or at a nominal rate, but members had to make their own arrangements with the funeral home and secure the burial plot. The total cost for the services ran from approximately \$3,000 to \$3,850 per funeral. Often various families in the community contributed money to offset the costs, while at other times the expense would be covered by the mosque itself. In many instances, the deceased had to be a member of the mosque to qualify for these benefits. For example, the Islamic Society of Greater Kansas limited access to burial space in their cemetery to its members' families.

Muslim Americans who died serving in the UNITED STATES MILITARY were sometimes buried in national military cemeteries. For example, Kareem Rashad Sultan Khan, a Muslim American killed in Iraq in 2007, was interred at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. Khan was buried with full military honors at Arlington, and his headstone bore



The burial of Azhar Ali, 2005. Ali, a Pakistani American serving in New York's National Guard, was killed by an improvised explosive device in Iraq. He was buried in accordance with Muslim burial rites, with one exception: His family waited more than 24 hours for Pakistani relatives to obtain the necessary visas to attend the service. (Andrew Lichtenstein/Corbis)



the crescent and star of Islam. As did other military funerals, his included the participation of a clergy member for the religious portion of the service, while other military personnel conducted the military honors and burial.

In this period, the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA), the largest grassroots Muslim-American organization, used the INTERNET to distribute resources covering spiritual and practical concerns about death and funeral arrangements, including a state-by-state guide to legal requirements. The ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA created a relief fund to help families with funeral expenses. In 2005, the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR) issued a set of guidelines concerning funerals and burial meant to aid journalists seeking to understand Muslim practices better.

Muslim Americans have come together to educate state and local legislators about Muslim funeral practices and have successfully sought changes in the laws surrounding burial requirements and mortician training for practicing Muslims. At the beginning of the 21st century, the Foundation for Appropriate and Immediate Temporary Help (FAITH) in Herndon, Virginia, trained lay workers to care for the dead safely and professionally. In 2007, Maryland legislators Saqib Ali and Samuel I. Rosenberg—a Muslim and a Jew—joined together to draft legislation that provided an alternative licensing track for funeral directors who did not wish to practice embalming, which violates both Muslim and Jewish religious law. The funeral practices of Muslims have also drawn support from environmental groups who support changes in U.S. burial practices in favor of more ecofriendly options. Many of these groups have opposed the use of vaults and heavy caskets, putting them on the side of Muslims and Jews who, in accordance with their traditions, wish to be placed directly in the earth when buried.

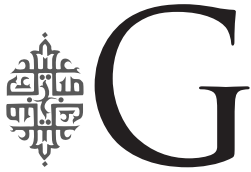
Muslim Americans also opened their own funeral homes and cemeteries in communities across the country or have forged community relationships with local non-Muslim owners to facilitate access to appropriate services when needed. For example, Erhan Yildirim of Brooklyn, New York, became the founder and operator of Islamic Funeral Services, a company that handled about 225 funerals per year in the early 2000s. Also an imam, or religious leader, Yildirim carefully prepared the bodies of the deceased, prayed over them, and made final arrangements, trying to attend to every detail of funeral rites that have been repeated for centuries.

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**gay Muslims** See LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER MUSLIMS.

### Georgia seacoast

African and Muslim cultural, religious, and linguistic influences were preserved to an unusual degree along the barrier islands off the coast of Georgia and South Carolina. In his book *Gullah Culture in America* (2008), Wilbur Cross speculated that cultural preservation was due to both economic and climatic conditions that created a different environment for slave labor than was common for other parts of the American south. The Georgia seacoast (also called the Sea Islands) was suitable for the cultivation of rice, a feature of traditional West African agriculture. This encouraged the importation of slave laborers from a concentrated area in western and central Africa in the 18th century. Due to the presence of tropical diseases such as malaria, white settlement on the Georgia coast was minimized. The inability of white settlers to colonize the area effectively eventually gave rise to an African population relatively unexposed to Anglo-American cultural evolution. The traditional culture of western Africa was influenced by Islamic religion and the ARABIC language. This Islamic heritage was a vital part of the cultural world of the slaves that in time formed the communities of the Georgia seacoast.

Many elements of traditional African culture were retained, such as language and religion. GULLAH, the traditional language of the Georgia seacoast, drew on the native languages of Africa, such as Ibo and Yoruba, as well as elements of Arabic. For example, many names in Gullah, such as Kalifa (caliph), Wali (protector), and Moriba (marabout), are directly related to Islamic ideas. Some scholars have also speculated that the Gullah word for *shout* may be related to the Arabic term that refers to the circumambulation of the Ka'ba during the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The Islamic faith also survived along the Georgia seacoast. AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES continued to observe various prayer rituals from African Islamic traditions, including the *salat*, the prescribed Islamic prayer in which believers pros-

trated themselves toward Mecca, and the *DHIKR*, or prayers of remembrance in which a Muslim recites religious litanies in praise of God. Islamic prayer rugs and prayer beads remained a feature of the religious life of the Gullah culture, as did head coverings for both men and women. Traditions of PHILANTHROPY were also upheld: The island tradition of *saraka*, or the offering of a charitable rice ball or cake, directly corresponded with the African Muslim tradition of *sadaqa*.

African and Muslim traditions were preserved on the Georgia seacoast to a degree unmatched in other areas of the United States due to the relative absence of white settlement, an economy based on the production of rice, and the concentrated nature of slave origins on the coast.

Patrick Callaway

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### Interview with Ben Sullivan, Grandson of a Muslim Slave (1938)

*Ben Sullivan (ca. 1850–unknown) was 88 years old when he gave an interview to the federally funded interviewers working for the Georgia Writers' Project in 1938. He was the son of Bilali Sullivan, a butler, and grandson of Salih Bilali, a slave who oversaw the agricultural work of hundreds of slaves on St. Simon's Island, Georgia. While growing up along the Georgia seacoast, Ben Sullivan observed various Islamic practices. He remembered a man named Israel praying with the aid of a book—perhaps a volume of the Qur'an—and using a prayer mat to perform salat, the Islamic prayers that involve a series of prostrations in the direction of Mecca, at dawn and sundown. He also recalled men and women covering their heads with white cloth. One man wore a kind of turban while a woman wore a hijab. In remembering his youth, Ben Sullivan also remembered the "funny" language of many slaves, reflecting that along the relatively isolated seacoast, African Americans created their own form of English, Gullah.*



"We belong tuh duh Coupers. Ise son tuh Belali. He wuz butluh tuh James Couper at Altama. I membuh we hab lots uh time tuh play wen we's chilluns." He smiled pleasantly at the memory.

This man, too, remembered native Africans he had known, for he told us, "I membuh lots uh Africans, but all ub em ain tame. But I knowd some ub em wut is tame an I knowd one tame Indian."

We asked again about old Alexander, the African root maker.

"Yes'm, I membuh him. He wuz a lill black man an he belong tuh duh Butlers but I ain know him well cuz we's diffunt people. Now ole man Okra an ole man Gibson an Ole Israel, dey's African an dey belong tuh James Couper an das how I knows em. Dey tell us how dey lib in Africa. Dey laks tuh talk. It funny talk an it ain so easy tuh unnuhstan but yuh gits use tuh it. Dey say dey buil deah own camp deah an lib in it.

"Ole man Okra he say he wahn a place lak he hab in Africa so he buil im a hut. I membuh it well. It wuz bout twelve by foeteen feet an it hab dut flo an he buil duh side lak basket weave wid clay plas-tuh on it. It hab a flat roof wut he make frum bush an palmettuh an it hab one doe an no winduhs. But Massuh make im pull it down. He say he ain wahn no African hut on he place.

"Ole Israel he pray a lot wid a book he hab wut he hide, an he take a lill mat an he say he prayuhs on it. He pray wen duh sun go up an wen duh sun go down. Dey ain none but ole Israel wut pray on a mat. He hab he own mat. Now ole man Israel he hab shahp feechuh an a long pointed beahd, an he wuz bery tall. He alluz tie he head up in a wite clawt, an seem he keep a lot uh clawt on ban, fuh I membuh, yuh could see em hangin roun duh stable dryin."

Asked if he remembered any other Africans who tied their heads up, the old man told us, "I membuh a ole [w]uhmun name Daphne. [S]he didn tie he head up lak ole man Israel. [S]he weah loose wite veil on he head. S[h]e waz shahp-feechuh too an fight uh complexion. S[h]e weah one ring in he eah fuh he eyes. I hab refrence to it bein some kine uh pruhtection tuh he eyes. Wen [s]he pray, [s]he bow two aw tree times in duh middle uh duh prayuh."



Source: Georgia Writers' Project. *Drums and Shadows*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1940, pp. 170–171.

## Girl Scouts

Founded by Juliette Gordon Low (1860–1927) on March 12, 1912, as the American Girl Guides, the Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA) established itself as the largest girl's volunteer organization in the United States. Although widespread participation in the scouting organization by Muslim girls and women is a more recent phenomenon in the United States, there is evidence of female Muslim participation as early as WORLD WAR I, when Syrian Boy and Girl Scout Troops flourished in New York, Massachusetts, and Ohio. A generation later, Syrian troops, along with other Arab-American groups, took pride in aiding the war effort during WORLD WAR II in the sales of war savings bonds and stamps. Along with such demonstrations of patriotism, the Girl Scout program sought to uplift the role and position of women in society. Connecting traditional American roles for women with progressive feminism (especially as promoted by feminist groups in the 1960s and 1970s), GSUSA heralded a new day for the upbringing of American girls.

As part of the trend to diversify the GSUSA, all-Muslim Girl Scout troops began to emerge in the middle to late 1970s. In 1978, the Atlanta Masjid of Islam sponsored what is considered to be the oldest all-Muslim Girl Scout troop in the United States. One of its founders, Sandra El-Amin, explained their desire to create opportunities for young girls. Some of these opportunities have been discussions on diversity, health activities, camping, and effectively serving the larger community. This sentiment has been echoed by the Muslim Girl Scouts of Michigan, whose mission has been to encourage "Islamic values, social conscience, and conviction of their own potential and self-worth." Girls also learn "to be loyal, honest, considerate, caring, unselfish, courageous, cooperative, responsible, courteous, and respectful Muslim leaders following the steps of our Great role-model Sayyida Fatima ALZahraa," the daughter of the prophet MUHAMMAD.

Private religious organizations such as MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS have sponsored Muslim troops, though the GSUSA does not track religious affiliation. The Islamic Committee on Girl Scouting in Connecticut estimated in 2006 that there were approximately 1,000 Muslim girls in scouting nationwide.

All-Muslim Girl Scout troops encourage members to participate fully in American society while also taking pride in their identity as Muslims. In response to the success of the formation of the Islamic Council on Scouting of North America in 1982, Gulafshan K. Alavi established the National Islamic Committee on Girl Scouting of USA in Stamford, Connecticut, in 1988. This committee, like its male counterpart, has overseen the Islamic medal program, including the "Bismallah," "In the Name of Allah," "Qurat Ul A'In," and the "Muslimeen" awards, as well as offering "Hajj" and "Ramadhan" patches. Endorsed by the GSUSA, this independent group has grown

rapidly, issuing approximately 400 patches for girls who had studied Ramadhan traditions in 2007.

Though Muslim scouts constituted a small percentage of the estimated 3.7 million scouts in the early 21st century, all-Muslim troops have flourished in every region of the United States. In 2003, Chicago's Muslim Scouts, which includes Girl, Boy, and Cub Scouts, claimed that its membership of 150 made it the largest Muslim scouting group in the country. In Minneapolis, following outreach efforts from the Girl Scout Council, almost 300 girls joined 10 predominantly Muslim troops by the first decade of the 21st century. All-Muslim Girl Scout troops have also emerged in Phoenix, Nashville, WASHINGTON, D.C., Santa Clara, and Salt Lake City.

The preamble to the GSUSA constitution declares that members of the Girl Scouts are "united by a belief in God," but does not define "God." The organization decided in 1993 that "God" in the pledge could be substituted with "Allah," the ARABIC term for God after which Muslim troops began to recite a slightly modified form of the scout pledge that "On my honor I will try to serve Allah and my country, to help people and live by the Girl Scout law." Other accommodations on the part of some troops have also been attempted, such as dispensation with saying Grace before camp meals and inclusion of a more Muslim-friendly diet, such as all-beef hotdogs.

Part of the strong and growing Muslim attraction to GSUSA is its emphasis on developing spiritual and moral character, together with providing opportunities for community service and PHILANTHROPY, all-important traditions in ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS LIFE. In addition, Muslim Girl Scout troops offer important social and religious networking for Muslim-American girls. Infusing GSUSA with a specifically Islamic spirit, all-Muslim troops have inspired young Muslims to take confidence and pride in both their Islamic faith and their American nationality, although more Muslim girls have joined predominantly non-Muslim troops than exclusively Muslim troops.

Muslim Girl Scouts often wear the *hijab* together with the official Girl Scout uniform. After the al-Qaeda terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, led to a backlash against Muslim Americans, the images of these Muslim scouts helped correct negative stereotypes of Muslim Americans. "It is good to have something to associate yourself with other Americans," noted Minneapolis resident Asma Haidara in 2007, a 12-year-old Somali immigrant. "I don't want people to think that I am a hermit, that I live in a cave, isolated and afraid of change. I like to be part of society. I like being able to say that I am a girl scout just like any other normal girl." On the *Oprah Winfrey Show* in January 2008, 11-year-old Girl Scout Anwar Esam Omeish of MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY's Troop 3611 represented Muslim Girl Scouts in a tableau of girls from different ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds to commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech at the 1963 March on Washington, D.C.

GSUSA's active endorsement of Muslim troops has been an important vehicle for American Muslim girls in learning more about their religious traditions and to serve their local communities. In 2002, GSUSA awarded Noorain Khan of Grand Rapids, Michigan, the Girl Scout Gold Award Young Women of Distinction for her leadership in education, community outreach, and fund-raising. In 2004, Sarrah Abulughod of Saukville, Wisconsin, received the same award for holding panels where Muslim teens could talk about their culture, together with other religious and social issues in a nonconfrontational setting. Such efforts show how Muslim scouts play a part in the broader Muslim-American community to project a positive and engaged Muslim-American identity.

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**God (Allah)** See ISLAMIC THOUGHT; RELIGIOUS LIFE.

### Great Depression

The economic downturn of the late 1920s and 1930s profoundly affected the Muslim-American community. Like all Americans, Muslim Americans lost jobs, homes, and farms as a result of the Great Depression. They relied on kinship ties, mutual aid organizations, and, in some cases, government relief to survive the economic collapse.

The Great Depression affected Muslim Americans in other ways as well. As part of the New Deal, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's economic recovery effort, the federal government instituted the WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA) to provide out-of-work Americans with employment. Among its many projects, the WPA collected oral histories from immigrants and others whose traditional cultures were disappearing in the United States. Two of the groups that were the subjects of these interviews were the GULLAH people of the GEORGIA SEACOAST and Syrian-Lebanese immigrants to NORTH DAKOTA, both of whom had Muslim origins. These WPA writers' projects produced a vast array of data concern-

ing the existence of Muslim settlement in the United States in the 19th and early 20th centuries and marked the first effort to collect oral histories systematically on a national scale. It is mainly because of such efforts that we know of the possibility that multiple generations of slaves and free persons of color practiced Islam along the Georgia seacoast.

The founding of grassroots black Muslim organizations such as the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) in 1930 was another feature of the depression era. Though AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS had established Islamic groups in the 1920s, a time of relative economic growth, the depression shaped the ideals and goals of those Islamic groups that already existed and those newly founded during the depression era. In the 1920s, Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association had stressed the need for people of African descent to create their own businesses and remain independent from the white-dominated marketplace. That ideal was practiced by the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, which created a line of health-care products and toiletries for African Americans in the 1920s.

But the goal of economic self-determination furthered by such entrepreneurial efforts became an even more urgent matter of survival in the Great Depression. Unemployment rates soared among the 1.5 million Southern black migrants who had left their agrarian lives in the South to look for work in the North between WORLD WAR I and WORLD WAR II. It became difficult for hundreds of thousands of African Americans to feed their families. In response, various Muslim groups renewed Garvey's call for economic independence. African-American Sunni Muslims of the ADDEYNU ALLAHE UNIVERSAL ARABIC ASSOCIATION embraced the "yeoman ideal" of agrarian self-sufficiency and bought farmland near Buffalo, New York, in the late 1930s. Their goal was to raise crops and tend livestock, attempting to buffer themselves from the business cycle of the economy and from a white-dominated marketplace in which blacks faced employment discrimination.

This depression-era urgency to be economically independent survived long after the depression ended with the onset of WORLD WAR II. The NOI's success as an African-American Muslim movement was inextricably linked to its call for thrift, industry, and economic development among African Americans. Wherever NOI temples and mosques were established after 1945, African-American Muslims erected grocery stores, pastry shops, laundries, restaurants, and other small businesses. In addition, NOI leader Elijah Muhammad purchased and developed multimillion-dollar businesses, including farms, fish importing, and a bank, that employed hundreds if not thousands of African Americans into the 1970s. Long after the Great Depression was over, then, its legacy remained a potent force among Muslim Americans.

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### Guantánamo Bay

Guantánamo Bay, a harbor located at the southeastern tip of Cuba, is the site of a U.S. naval base, often referred to by military personnel as GTMO, or Gitmo. The name has become synonymous with the highly controversial prison and detention center that has held detainees captured during the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq since 2002, but the base has existed since 1903 and is the oldest U.S. offshore military base. The base is located on approximately 45 square miles of land.

The United States occupied Guantánamo Bay in 1898 during the Spanish-American War, as part of a stated effort to "liberate" Cuba from Spanish control. The terms for the end of the war were formalized through the Platt Amendment, a document drafted and approved by the U.S. Congress and appended to the constitution of Cuba in 1901. The amendment included the stipulation that the United States could maintain bases in Cuba as determined necessary by the president of the United States. This cleared the way for the Cuban-American treaty of 1903, which included a permanent lease agreement for the U.S. presence at Guantánamo Bay. The legality of this treaty came into question with the abrogation of the Platt Amendment in 1934 and has been contested by the Cuban government since the Revolution of 1959, which brought Fidel Castro to power. The government of Cuba has not cashed the yearly land-lease checks of \$4,085 since 1934, to protest the presence of the base on Cuban territory, citing the pressure exerted by the United States at the initial signing of the treaty, but the lease cannot be terminated without the consent of the United States.

In the 1990s, the base served as a migrant camp for Cubans and Haitians detained while seeking refuge due to political unrest. The United States came under international criticism for involuntary repatriation of these populations. In January 2002, the United States brought the first prisoners from Afghanistan to Guantánamo Bay. The U.S. government used the term "unlawful enemy combatants" to describe the status of the prisoners rather than the conventional term "prisoners of war." As a result, claimed the administration of President George W. Bush, the prisoners fell outside the legal protections guaranteed in the Geneva Convention and U.S. law.

Most if not all of those imprisoned at Guantánamo Bay have been Muslims. The international community has sharply criticized the United States for detaining the prisoners without formally charging them, or allowing them due process





The U.S. military began holding “enemy combatants” at the detention center at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, in 2002. Controversial interrogation techniques, which critics labeled as torture, included sensory deprivation. (AP Photo/U.S. Navy, Shane T. McCoy)

through the writ of habeas corpus, which allows prisoners to challenge their detention in a court of law. In addition, the conditions of the camp and the interrogation practices employed, especially the use of waterboarding, have been condemned as inhumane by much of the international community and a host of human rights organizations. According to these groups, the prisoners have been denied adequate access to legal assistance and communication, and religion has been employed as a means of coercion and humiliation. For example, the first prisoners were kept in narrow chain-link enclosures resembling dog runs, with cement floors and a mat for sleeping. Prisoners were issued two towels and told that one could be used as a prayer mat. Though more permanent facilities were eventually built, the new cells were tiny, and the men spent 22 to 23 hours a day in isolation.

In 2002, U.S. army chaplain JAMES YEE (1968– ), a third-generation Chinese American and West Point graduate, was actively recruited to serve as a Muslim chaplain at Guantánamo. After serving for 11 months, Yee was wrongly accused of espionage (the army later dropped the charges and in 2005 gave him an honorable discharge.). Since 2003, no Muslim chaplain has been reassigned to Guantánamo, and a Christian chaplain was appointed to the position.

In August 2003, 23 prisoners attempted a mass suicide by hanging. There have been hundreds of incidents categorized

by the military as self-harm, and a psychiatric unit has been established at the base. Prisoners have also engaged in hunger strikes. In 2005, a Pentagon report confirmed that abuses of the QUR’AN had taken place. Guards and interrogators at Guantánamo had deliberately thrown, kicked, and soiled the volumes of the Qur’an read by prisoners. The U.N. Committee on Torture called for the closure of the camp in May 2006, sharply criticizing the interrogation methods that included sexual humiliation, mock drownings, and attack dogs.

While the vast majority of those detained at Guantánamo have not been U.S. citizens, there were a small number of Muslim Americans, including JOSE PADILLA and Yaser Esam Hamdi, who were picked up for alleged ties to al-Qaeda and categorized as “enemy combatants,” a designation that stripped away many of their legal rights, including that of habeas corpus and protections afforded by the Geneva Convention. The U.S. Supreme Court has issued three rulings against government policies implemented by the Bush administration. The first ruling, *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld* (2004), held that though the United States declared Hamdi an “illegal enemy combatant,” the Louisiana native, seized in Afghanistan, could not be denied the right of habeas corpus. Hamdi was eventually released without charge. In *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld* (2006), a second ruling, the Supreme Court ruled that a law passed by Congress to allow the U.S. government to try enemy combatants by military tribunals, rather than through the court system, violated the dictates of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and the third Geneva Convention, which deals with the treatment of prisoners of war. The third ruling, *Boumediene v. Bush* (2008), afforded the right of habeas corpus to all detainees, both U.S. citizens and foreign nationals. When Lakhdar Boumediene, an Algerian-born citizen of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was granted a hearing to challenge his detainment, U.S. District Court Judge Richard J. Leon found the evidence against Boumediene was insufficient to merit further detainment. He issued a ruling that Boumediene be freed and that no appeal should be filed by the government. In these three separate cases, the judiciary upheld that the balance of power between the branches of government must remain intact, that “enemy combatants” possessed certain basic rights, and that the rule of law must prevail.

On January 22, 2009, President Barack Obama ordered the closing of the Guantánamo Bay Detention Center by January 2010, eight years after the first prisoners had arrived from Afghanistan. This was one of his first official acts as president, which indicated the high priority of this issue for his administration. The order was viewed favorably by the international community and drew praise from international leaders and human rights organizations. The Obama administration, however, was unable to meet the goal of closing Guantánamo in early 2010.

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### Gülen Movement

The Gülen movement emerged in Turkey in the late 1970s by followers of Muslim preacher and teacher Fethullah Gülen (1938– ). The group, known by participants as Hizmet, meaning *service*, has combined an emphasis on PHILANTHROPY with religious piety, as influenced by SUFISM and Anatolian culture. It teaches that selfless service and moral self-evaluation are central values of Islam. While anchored in traditional practice and interpretation, it is liberal in its desire to conduct dialogues with people of other faiths and to serve everyone regardless of confessional or ethnic identity.

Beginning in the Turkish city of Izmir, where Gülen was a popular preacher, the movement established schools within Turkey in the late 1970s and gradually expanded into the Turkish public and economic sectors, such as media and finance. By 2010, the movement was said to have many millions of supporters, global networks of schools, and ownership of major media and financial enterprises in Turkey. Their global reach was possible because the group was supported by businessmen as well as by teachers, students, and middle-class Turks sympathetic to its objectives.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the group's successful model of schools that focused on moral development of pupils along with excellence in academics, especially science, was exported by Gülen's followers to the ex-Soviet republics in Central Asia. Gradually its educational projects and other activities expanded to the rest of Asia and Africa. This global perspective grew to include involvement in INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS and intercultural dialogue within Turkey and in other parts of the world.

In the 1990s, young Turkish immigrants who were supporters of Gülen undertook related activities in large American cities and university towns where they were students. Some major foundations associated with Gülen that were ultimately established include the Niagara Foundation founded in CHICAGO in 1997, the Rumi Forum created in WASHINGTON, D.C., in 1999, and Raindrop, a group started in Houston, Texas, in 2000. ISLAMIC SCHOOLS inspired by the teachings of Gülen in the United States initially served Turkish-American children in NEW YORK CITY, New Jersey, and Chicago. By 2008, municipal public charter schools were being operated by Gülen movement affiliates in a number of cities on the East Coast and in some Midwestern states.

The organization has also been active in interfaith and intercultural dialogue in the United States. Tours of the dervishes from the MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER to North American cities have been regularly sponsored since 2004. In addition, tours to Turkey are regularly organized by local branches to familiarize school administrators, public officials, businesspeople, and other opinion molders with the widespread influence of the group in Turkey and, more broadly, with Turkish and Muslim culture.

A global satellite television network run by the Gülen movement, Ebru TV, was established in New Jersey in 2005. It produces its own English programming, as well as translating popular productions of the Samanyolu network from Turkey, part of the media outreach of the Gülen group. Since 2000, Gülen associates have published an American bilingual edition of *Zaman*, a newspaper with one of the highest circulations in Turkey. The widespread distribution of movement publications and the establishment of bookstores have been integral to the outreach of the Gülen movement in Turkey. An American branch, Light Publishing, based in New Jersey, disseminates Gülen's many published writings, as well as other works related to Islam and the Muslim world.

The activities of the Gülen community in the United States have clustered in major cities where TURKISH MUSLIM AMERICANS have invited non-Muslims to interfaith dinners, Ramadan fast-breaking meals, cultural performances and festivals, local and national academic conferences, and lectures by civic leaders on topics of shared concern. While striving to maintain cordial relations with other Muslim-American groups, the group has not been very active in Muslim-American organizations such as the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA. The primary focus of the Gülen movement has been networking with American interreligious, educational, business, and even political circles.

In terms of internal dynamics, Gülen communities have sponsored regular internal events for affiliates, almost all of whom are Turkish, including religious seminars known as "reading circles" or "camps" and "*sohbet*" (conversation) sessions with senior leaders of the group known as "*abis*" and

other local teachers. Regular study circles have perused and discussed Gülen's texts and met to share their struggles to live a religious and morally examined life. Many of the members have been young graduates or students.

Fethullah Gülen himself took up residence outside Philadelphia in 1999 after coming to the United States for a heart operation. The rationale for his residing in the United States was for personal health reasons. Others factors may have included avoiding political pressure and personal threats in Turkey. For example, Gülen had faced a long court case in which it was alleged that he had challenged the secular nature of the Turkish state. In Pennsylvania, Gülen has been surrounded by a group of his students of Islamic studies, and he has been regularly visited by teachers and activists of his movement who live in the United States or come from Turkey or other parts of the world for that purpose.

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### Gullah

Gullah is the traditional language of the GEORGIA SEACOAST, as well as a label for the culture developed in relative isolation from a more assimilated form of American slave culture. Gullah draws on the native languages of western and central Africa, such as Ibo and Yoruba, as well as elements of ARABIC. The Gullah language is a uniquely preserved cultural artifact that displays the influence of Islam and African linguistic traditions in the United States. These traditions are revealed through the vocabulary and structure of Gullah and their similarities to traditional African forms. Knowledge of the Gullah language and culture was recorded during the 1930s and 1940s before the large-scale assimilation of the Gullah population into the larger American culture.

Geographic isolation is a key element in the survival of Gullah as a distinct, creolized form of English. The vocabulary of Gullah reflects the African and Islamic heritage preserved on the Georgia seacoast with a minimum of outside influences from either white or more acculturated African-

American populations. For example, the Gullah word *shout* is thought to derive from the Arabic word that describes the ritualistic pilgrimage around the Ka'ba, the sacred building in the court of the Great Mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Arabic influence on the language is further illustrated by the naming patterns of the people of the islands. Many personal names in Gullah are directly related to Islamic ideals. Common names on the Georgia seacoast included Kalifa (caliph), Wali (protector), and Moriba (marabout, a Muslim African dervish). Other names reflected the lasting influence of the Islamic calendar: Altrine (Monday, or *ithnayn*), Talata (Tuesday, or *thulatha*), and Araba (Wednesday, or *arbi'a*). In his studies during the 1930s and 1940s, linguist Lorenzo Dow Turner discovered more than 300 direct loan words and more than 4,000 individual names from African languages that were common in Gullah. The prevalence of African- and Islamic-influenced names is a reflection of the endurance of those cultural traditions.

Vocabulary is one reflection of the influence played by Islamic and African traditions in the Gullah language. The structural elements of the language are also heavily influenced by African linguistic traditions. Before the 1940s, Gullah was thought by many scholars to be a form of English and not a part of an African oral heritage. Not until Turner's work in the 1940s was a connection made between Gullah and African linguistics. In his research, Turner discovered that the syntax, word order, parts of speech, phonetic pronunciation, and other structural elements of Gullah are directly comparable to African languages such as Ibo and Yoruba.

The preservation of Gullah as a distinct dialect due to geographical isolation also allowed for the preservation of Gullah as a distinct culture. This distinction is shown in some of the proverbs that have been preserved. For example, one proverb reads "mus tek cyear a de root fa heal the tree" (take care of the roots in order to heal the tree).

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**hadith** See ISLAMIC THOUGHT; RELIGIOUS LIFE; SHARI‘A.

## hajj

Most religiously observant Muslim Americans consider the hajj, or annual pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, to be one of the pillars of the Islamic faith. By the 21st century, approximately 10,000 to 12,000 Muslim Americans made the pilgrimage to Mecca each year. Though few Muslim Americans attended the hajj before the 1970s, the ritual has held deep symbolic meaning for many Muslims in American history, from slave times to the present. The hajj—as both a real and an imaginary event—has connected Muslim Americans to the worldwide Muslim community and symbolized the ideal of global Muslim unity.

### HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Since medieval times, there have been various forms of religious pilgrimage practiced by Muslims, including *ziyara*, or visitation to the shrine of Muslim saints or tombs of the Prophet MUHAMMAD’s family members; *rihla* and *talab al-‘ilm*, or journeys in search of adventure and knowledge; and *umra*, a visit to Mecca that can occur any time of the year. But the hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca that occurs each lunar year in the month of Dhu al-Hijja, has been accorded a special place in the Islamic tradition. An arduous journey even today, the hajj was performed by able-bodied Muslims who left their villages and cities with the knowledge that they might never return.

The hajj takes place in Mecca, the birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad (570–632). It is considered the holiest place on earth for Muslims, sometimes called “the navel of the earth.” From a theological standpoint, Mecca is significant since Muslims are directed by the QUR’AN to pray in its direction. It is also considered to be the site on which Adam was first instructed by God to build the first house of worship and the site on which Abraham and Ishmael renewed humanity’s covenant with God.

The hajj is celebrated on the eighth through the 12th days of Dhu al-Hijja, the last month of the lunar year. The

last three months are designated as hajj season, and pilgrims begin to arrive in the month of Shawwal, while others also spend the entire month of Ramadan in Mecca, then continue their stay until they complete the hajj.

Before entering Mecca, pilgrims are required to change their clothing. Rather than wearing everyday clothes, MEN must wear two unsewn sheets of white cloth called *ihram*. All other items like watches, wallets, and belts are removed for the duration of the pilgrimage. In this way there is no outward identification of class, wealth, or status in society. WOMEN may wear everyday clothes but must be covered from head to ankle. During the hajj, one sees women dressed in a variety of indigenous dress styles that mark the great diversity of Muslims from different parts of the world. Some women also wear a white garment that resembles the *ihram*, but this is not required as it is of men. The white sheets are plain and unadorned and remind Muslims that they should be in a state of submission to God first and foremost. The white sheets worn on hajj are also a reminder of the white sheets that one is buried in and again serve as a reminder of the impermanence of earthly life.

Pilgrims enter the holy precincts of Mecca through established gates and checkpoints called *miqat*. As pilgrims enter the *haram*, the sanctuary of Mecca, they must abide by certain restrictions to maintain their state of ritual purity. Pilgrims must abstain from sexual intercourse, clipping their nails, hunting, wearing perfume or jewelry, cutting their hair, uprooting living things, arguing, and talking about the opposite sex. Women should keep their heads covered, and men are required to keep theirs uncovered. Approaching Mecca and throughout the hajj, pilgrims recite constantly the *tal-biya*: “I am here, O my God, I am here! I am here, Thou art without any associate, I am here! Praise and blessing belong to Thee, and Power.”

Arriving in Mecca, the pilgrims proceed to the sacred mosque through the Door of Peace, reciting Qur’anic verses. Muslims are required first to visit the Ka’ba, located inside the Grand Mosque complex. Muslims walk around (circum-ambulate, or *tawaf*) the Ka’ba counterclockwise seven times. This *tawaf* is considered, like prayer, to be symbolic of the



pilgrims' entering into God's divine presence. The Ka'ba is seen as the most sacred place on earth for Muslims and is the site that Muslims pray toward in their daily prayers.

Muslims are sometimes overcome with joy as they approach the Ka'ba during pilgrimage because they are approaching the place toward which they have spent their lives praying. Ka'ba means literally "cube." It is a cube-shaped structure known as "The House of God." The Ka'ba contains the Black Stone (*hajar al-aswad*) that is believed to be a meteorite placed by Abraham and Ishmael in one of the corners that represents God's covenant with Abraham and Ishmael and, by extension, the rest of the Muslim community. The Ka'ba is approximately 45 feet high and 33 by 50 feet wide, and it is draped with a woven black cloth embellished with Qur'anic verses embroidered with golden thread. The cloth is changed annually and is prepared each year by faithful Muslims who take very seriously their duty of covering and protecting the Ka'ba.

Muslims believe the Ka'ba is the first house of worship on earth built first by Adam, rebuilt by Abraham and Ishmael, then rebuilt and cleared of all false deities by the Prophet Muhammad. Adam built the Ka'ba to replicate the heavenly House of God that contains the divine throne circumambulated by angels. Thus, pilgrims circumambulate the Ka'ba seven times as a reenactment of the angels circumambulating the throne of God in Heaven. After Adam built the Ka'ba, it fell into disrepair from neglect of nonbelievers and from damage from a great flood. According to the Qur'an (2:127), Abraham and his son Ishmael rebuilt the Ka'ba to reestablish God's covenant.

During Muhammad's lifetime before he was declared a prophet, the Ka'ba had fallen under the control of a tribe in Mecca who used it as a shrine to house all of the tribal gods and goddesses and idol figures of the pagan pantheon of Arabia. On his return to Mecca after a forced exile to Medina in 622, Muhammad cleared all 360 of the statues representing tribal gods and goddesses and idol figures out of the Ka'ba, restoring it to the monotheistic tradition, the "religion of Abraham."

After circumambulating the Ka'ba, Muslims perform two *rakat* of prayer at the Place of Abraham, where he is said to have worshipped when building the Ka'ba. While the circumambulation around the Ka'ba represents spiritual contact with God, the next rite of reenacting Hagar's running and searching for water is symbolic of humankind's ongoing struggle and survival. This is where God tested Abraham by asking him to leave his wife, Hagar, and their son, Ishmael, who is considered a common ancestor of all Arabs. Pilgrims walk and sometimes run in a circuitlike motion along a quarter-mile corridor of the Grand Mosque in memory of Hagar's desperate attempt to find water for Ishmael after Sarah had cast her out of her home with Abraham. Facing the desert

heat as her water supply diminished, Hagar ran between the two hills of Safa and Marwa looking for water, chasing mirages.

Each of the seven jaunts performed between the two hills performed by the pilgrims is 443 yards long. Ishmael, who had been waiting for Hagar, kicked the ground when a stream of water burst forth, the *zamzam*, which means "bubbling water." Muslim pilgrims reenact Hagar's plight and they, too, drink the miraculous *zamzam* water. Pilgrims fill bottles with the water and take it back to their relatives.

Next, pilgrims spend the night in the town of Mina a few miles away. When the sun rises the next morning, they then proceed to the valley of Arafat, where they assemble for a day to contemplate Abraham's sacrifice that God has asked of him. On the ninth day of the month of Dhu al-Hijja, pilgrims must stand from noon to sundown in meditation and giving praise to God, in the *wuquf*, or the standing ceremony. This is the central part of the hajj, and if pilgrims cannot complete it, their pilgrimage is considered unfulfilled. Muslims assemble here to commemorate the final pilgrimage of Muhammad in which he delivered his final farewell sermon to his followers.

At sunset, the pilgrims depart to spend the night at Muzdalifah. A portion of the evening is spent searching for 49 small stones for the next part of the hajj, another ritual traced back to Abraham. When the pilgrims return to Mina, they go to the three stone pillars that mark the spot where Abraham stood as he prepared to sacrifice his only son, and the devil tried to tempt him to disobey God's will. Like Abraham, pilgrims throw stones at the pillars to indicate their obedience to God, and also to rid the world of evil.

When the pilgrimage ends on the 10th day of Dhu al-Hijja, there is a festival that celebrates the completion of the hajj, and animals are sacrificed in commemoration of Abraham's test of faith. According to the Jewish and Christian version of this event, Abraham was commanded to sacrifice Isaac. According to the Muslim version of events, it was Ishmael whom God commanded Abraham to sacrifice. God spared Ishmael, and Abraham sacrificed a ram in his place. Pilgrims may sacrifice whatever animal they can afford; it may range from a sheep, a goat, a cow, or a camel. In reenacting this event, pilgrims renounce their worldly possessions for God. Pilgrims then do eat some of the meat, but the majority of it is given to the poor, along with the skins of the animals. This is celebrated all over the Muslim world in what is called the Festival of Sacrifice, or Eid al-Adha. Muslims throughout the world celebrate this day at the same time as with the pilgrims in Mecca.

After the ritual sacrifice, pilgrims have a haircut, which may be a full-fledged haircut or a symbolic removal of hair or cutting the fingernails. This marks the end of the restrictions required by the *ihram*, though sexual intercourse is still

prohibited. Another *tawaf* around the Ka'ba, a final symbolic stoning of the devil, and a last *tawaf* take place before the hajj is completed. Some pilgrims prepare to make a visit (*ziyara*) to Medina to the tomb of the Prophet Muhammad and other important historical sites. The visit to Muhammad's tomb is not required; however, it is encouraged in an Islamic tradition that promises heavenly intercession on behalf of those who do the *ziyara*.

After returning home, pilgrims are given a title of respect indicating that they have completed the hajj. The title for men is *hajji*, and for women *hajja*. Though the SHARI'A, or Islamic law and ethics, requires Muslims to perform the hajj, they must pay for it themselves without borrowing money and still be able to provide for dependant family members. Muslims save for many years for the pilgrimage, as the journey is costly. One should not borrow money for the hajj because it is not considered valid until all of one's debts have been repaid. For these reasons, many people go on pilgrimage later in their lives. The money used for the pilgrimage

should be purified by almsgiving, and before departure, one's will and testament must be written and in place should the pilgrim not survive the journey. One is not required to go if ill or too poor. One who dies during the pilgrimage is considered a martyr and earns entrance into paradise.

#### MUSLIM AMERICANS ON HAJJ

Muslim Americans have been performing the hajj since slave times, though they did so before arriving in the Americas. OMAR IBN SAID (1770–1864), a slave from North Carolina who published his autobiography in 1831, mentioned performing the hajj, and NICHOLAS SAID (ca. 1831–82) gave an extremely vivid account of the hajj in his autobiography, published in 1873. Though few studies document the presence of Muslim Americans during the hajj in the early 20th century, it is likely that some of the South Asian and Arab sailors who settled in places such as New Orleans and NEW YORK CITY in the late 19th and early 20th centuries performed the hajj before coming to the United States.



On their hajj to Mecca in 2006, Muslim-Americans Kim Rahman (*right*) and Catherine Smith of Illinois read from the Qur'an at the Plain of Arafat, one of the critical points on the pilgrimage. (Ali Jarekji/Reuters/Landov)

In the second half of the 20th century, there is far more documentation of Muslim-American participation in the hajj. Perhaps the most significant story of a Muslim American's hajj is that of MALCOLM X (1925–65), who on April 22, 1964, left to perform the pilgrimage that would be recorded in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965). In that book and in letters to his family, he said that during the hajj, people of all colors were present and side-by-side they were equals in the eyes of God. Though Malcolm X was not the only African American to attend hajj in this period—WALI AKRAM (1904–94) was another—his account of the journey inspired many others to follow in his footsteps. By the 1970s, hundreds of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, especially the followers of W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), were attending the hajj.

Many other converts, including WHITE MUSLIM AMERICANS and LATINA/O AMERICAN MUSLIMS, also went on hajj in the late 20th century. One full-length memoir of the hajj was that of Michael Wolfe, a Jewish-American convert to Islam who performed the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1990. *The Hadj* (1993) is Wolfe's first-person travel account of the ancient pilgrimage. In 1997, he published *One Thousand Roads to Mecca*, an anthology of 10 centuries of writing about the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, and that year, he hosted a televised account of the hajj from Mecca for Ted Koppel's news program *Nightline* on ABC. The program was later nominated for Peabody, Emmy, George Polk, and National Press Club Awards, and won the annual Media Award from the *Muslim Public Affairs Council*.

In performing the pilgrimage during the late 20th century, some Muslim Americans challenged other Muslims' notions of who should attend the hajj. For example, people with disabilities are excused from the requirement to perform the hajj, according to most interpretations of Islam. But ATLANTA disabilities advocate Betty Hasan Amin, who cannot walk, was determined to undertake the pilgrimage. She successfully completed the hajj in 1992, and later wrote about her experiences in *AZIZAH* magazine.

By the 21st century, hajj had become increasingly popular among Muslim Americans, and a travel industry arose in response to the desire of these Muslim Americans to join this annual event. The arduous journey required the completion of significant paperwork before departure, and Muslim-American travel agencies catered to a niche market of Muslim-American pilgrims, offering to secure necessary permissions and arrange logistics. In 2009, prices for attending the hajj by travel from the United States ranged between \$3,000 and \$6,000. Some travel agencies complained that their Muslim-American clients expected a stress-free hajj experience, but argued that with millions of people attending one event in the same locale, this was nearly impossible.

For most Muslim Americans who attended hajj and wrote about their journey later, however, the crowds at Mecca were just another part of an experience that they described as one of the meaningful spiritual events in their lives. Linking them to the worldwide community of Muslims, the hajj became an opportunity to reflect on the great ethnic, national, religious, and social differences among the global Muslim community. As Muslim Americans shared their stories of pilgrimage with other Americans, the hajj, once a symbol of exotic difference, became part of the American story too.

Maria F. Curtiss

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### Betty Hasan Amin

#### "Hajj in a Wheelchair," *Azizah* magazine (2001)

*One of the five pillars of Islamic religious practice, hajj brings together millions of Muslims each year to perform a series of rituals in Mecca, site of the Ka'ba, the mosque in the direction of which Muslims make their daily prayers. Many Muslims have said that the hajj, or pilgrimage, is the most meaningful spiritual experience of their lives, though it is an arduous journey that requires patience and physical stamina. Betty Hasan Amin knew that her pilgrimage in 1992 would be especially dangerous since she could not walk. But as a leading Muslim-American advocate for people with disabilities, she was determined to perform this ancient rite. Though shari'a, or Islamic law and ethics, exempts persons with disabilities from the requirement to make the pilgrimage, Amin declared that her disability should not prevent her from having the same opportunities as other believers. That passion informed Amin's work in Atlanta during the late 20th century on behalf of disabled*



*Muslim Americans who wanted equal access to mosques, Islamic schools, and other institutions. And that dedication also brought her through the pilgrimage even though it literally put her life at risk. In the following 2001 article from Azizah magazine, Amin describes her hajj.*



Locking my electric wheelchair into place behind the steering wheel of my specially-equipped van, I took a deep breath. I was beginning the journey of a lifetime—*hajj*! I knew that *hajj* would be a life-altering event. I also knew that, while *hajj* can be a struggle for an able-bodied person, it would be even more of a challenge for me, a paraplegic in a wheelchair with complex medical needs.

Paralyzed by a fall as a seventeen-year-old high school senior, through determination I managed to earn two college degrees during a time when curb cuts were unheard of and schools and colleges were fraught with architectural barriers. Now a divorced single mother, I was raising two sons, teaching at an Islamic school and feeling blessed with the Islamic faith that gave me the strength to strive toward realizing my human potential to its fullest.

Driven by love of Allah and a burning desire to fulfill the fifth pillar of Islam, I placed my trust in Allah. I also tied my camel! I made numerous and careful preparations for my journey. I attended *hajj* classes at the mosque, where I heard reports from numerous *hajjis* [people who had already gone on *hajj*]. I spoke at length to a brother who had recently performed *hajj* in a wheelchair himself. I secured the services of a sister and of a married couple who would accompany me on my trip; Sister Rasheedah Id-Deen, with years of nursing experience behind her, would assist me with personal care and needs, along with Sister Binta Kareem. Sister Binta's husband, Ocei Kareem, would take charge of the logistics of transporting me. Although I would be gone only four weeks, I painstakingly packed enough medical supplies, herbal remedies and energy foods to last me three months. Wary of the availability of electrical supply on the plains of Mina and Arafat, I opted for a manual wheelchair. As I euphorically drove off with three other sisters that May morning in 1992 to join a group of forty other Muslims bound for Mecca, I felt amply prepared.

Hand-carried by Brother Ocei and another brother on and off the Dulles Airport bus, I experienced humbling feelings of dependence that I had

not felt in years. Fortunately, Saudi Airlines had been apprised of my situation, and had a small chair ready for me that was especially designed to maneuver through the narrow airplane aisles. I was lifted onto the chair, and braced myself for the ride and transfer to my seat at the rear of the plane filled with Muslim pilgrims. Before I could get there, however, a non-Muslim couple who anticipated my difficulty stopped me. Out of the graciousness of their hearts, they offered me their seats at the front of the plane. Their kindness helped to calm me, and with the pilot's recitation of *surah al-fatiha* [the opening chapter of the Qur'an], we took off on our flight to Jeddah.

When we landed eleven hours later, I was loaded onto an elevette lift and lowered onto the tarmac by airport workers. I felt apprehensive during this procedure, wondering about the workers' procedure, wondering about the workers' abilities to deal with the disabled. I reminded myself to be patient, though, realizing that things would be different here in Saudi Arabia; there would be many cultural distinctions.

As we worked our way through customs, we waited while our tour group's leaders went to the aid of a stranded sister from Wisconsin. This woman, Sister Zainab, was being refused entry into the country because she was a single woman traveling alone. The brothers from our groups assured the officials that she could join our group. Although I did not realize it at the time, Allah had sent me another helper. Sister Zainab was a registered operating room nurse, and days later, she began to assist Rasheedah with my medical care, exhibiting great skill and concern.

At the crowded airport, the sisters helped me to don my *ihram* [the special garb worn by Muslims on the pilgrimage]. Then we moved onto a shuttle that took us to the staging area where we waited for a bus to take us to Mecca. The wait was long and hot, but certainly not dull! I watched, astonished and fascinated, the flow of arrivals of different groups of people from all over the world. When our bus finally arrived, though, I was greatly disappointed and saddened at its appearance—it was terribly old, without a wheelchair lift and with doors so narrow the brothers had to turn me sideways to lift me onto the bus.

My wheelchair, medical supplies, baggage and specially designed wheelchair cushion were packed on top of the bus with the rest of the luggage. As the bus took off, so did my cushion;



I spent the remainder of my trip sitting on make-shift pillows, diligently trying to avoid dangerous pressure sores.

Upon our arrival at our apartment, I saw that it was at the top of three flights of stairs. For the duration of our stay, I would have to be carried up and down those stairs sometimes two and three times a day as we went back and forth from prayers. The part of Mecca in which we stayed had a large African population, and the neighboring men often willingly came to the assistance of the group's brothers to carry me. As at the beginning of this journey, I again felt humbled by my dependence.

When our group finally made our way to Masjid Al-Haram [the Great Mosque in Mecca] . . . reverence and awe overwhelmed all of us. Tears flowed. A small voice inside me, however, told me to dry those tears, and soon I realized why—I would need all my strength and clarity. As I approached the *masjid* door in my wheelchair, a custodian jumped up and blocked my way. He shouted a torrent of angry words in Arabic, and then gestured brusquely. A look of great disdain on his face, he began to make shooing motions and sounds. Hurtfully, I saw that I was being shooed away from the Haram door the way a fly would be shooed away from a banquet!

The brothers in our group stepped forward and attempted to explain the particulars of my situation, but to no avail. We were being refused entry because I was in a wheelchair! I could not believe this was happening. I thought to myself, "He's kidding! I didn't travel thousands of miles to be prevented from performing my rites." But he was not kidding, and adamantly continued to refuse us entry.

I was shocked and angry. Here I was, a woman in a wheelchair, receiving the least possible compassion in Mecca, the place where I had expected the most sensitivity. I summoned the strength and determination I had learned during my twenty-six years of life as a disabled person, and decided to try another door.

The guard at the next door refused us in a similar situation. Undaunted and unbowed, we tried a third door. Again, our entry was barred. We tried a fourth and a fifth door, but were shooed away again. After being turned away from seven doors, and now a great distance from where we had begun, I began to feel disheartened. My inner voice, however, told me to hold on, pray and trust in Allah.

We decided to try one more time, this time at the doors of Safa and Marwa [the hills between which Hagar ran, looking to find water for Ishmael]. At this door sat a quiet elderly man, who looked like he was eighty years old. Not only did he allow us in, but he wrote a note in Arabic and told us, surprisingly in English, to show this note if we should have any more problems. *Alhamdulillah* [Praise be to God], that note was a great blessing, and did make things much easier. (Years later, I had it translated and learned that it said that the bearer was affiliated with the Atlanta Masjid, and should she expire while making hajj, to please contact the American Embassy.)

Once admitted, the brothers with me went off . . . , and I remained in the care of two hired Nigerian men. They lifted me into a large basket, and hoisted me onto their heads, and trotted toward the Ka'ba for *tawaf* [the ritual circumambulation of the Ka'ba]. My exhilaration at finally performing my rites was tempered by a great fear of toppling out of this unsteady device and being trampled by the swirling crowd below! There I sat, so far away from home, and completely dependent on people I did not know, whose language I could not speak nor understand, in an unfamiliar land. At that point, I realized the interdependence of humanity. During *sa'i* [the devotional act of walking between Safa and Marwa to commemorate Hagar's search for water], relieved to be on the ground in my familiar wheelchair, I repeated my *du'a* [supplicatory prayer] in a stronger voice.

When I was lifted into a bus headed for Arafat, I sat in great anticipation with my two attendants and two older sisters from our group. Unfortunately, as we sat in a three-hour traffic jam, fumes from the other buses exacerbated my respiratory problems, and my seat became increasingly uncomfortable. Then, when we finally reached Arafat, I could not get off the bus. The buses were parked so close together that the brothers could not carry me between them. I sat there on the bus all day, and made my prayers and *du'a* in my seat. At first I felt annoyed, thinking that I should be making a greater sacrifice, enduring the Saudi desert heat, but eventually I realized that being allowed to remain on the air conditioned bus was a mercy from Allah.

As we prepared to depart from Arafat, my attendant and his wife left for a quick trip to the bathroom. Meanwhile, the bus driver decided

it was time to leave! I was nearly in a frenzy as I begged him not to go just yet, and tried to explain that I could not walk and was waiting on my attendants to come back. Neither the bus driver nor any of the other passengers could understand me, and off we drove. All I could do was whisper desperately, “Lord, I am at Your mercy, here in the dark, driving somewhere I don’t know, with people who can’t understand me and don’t know me. The only two people on this bus I know can’t lift me. Please help me, Allah.”

At Muzdalifa [where pilgrims gather stones for the ritual stoning of the devil], everyone got off the bus. The driver shouted and gestured to me to get off, too. I tried to make him understand that I could not walk, and would need to be carried. He could not understand, and kept shouting. I knew that the two elderly sisters with me had neither the strength nor the expertise to lift me, so the sisters did the best they could and volunteered to pick up my pebbles for me. The bus driver finally gave up and left, and I slept on the bus alone.

We arrived back in Mina the next morning. When the bus had emptied, the driver again shouted and motioned for me to exit the bus. After some time an African man seemed to understand the problem, and lifted me out of the bus and into my chair. We did not know where we were, and this man kindly pushed me around and around for some time with the two elderly sisters wandering along with us. I began to despair, feeling that we would never find our camp. I told myself, “Allah knows every grain of sand, every leaf that falls. Out of all these million of people, I know Allah sees me.” I felt a great surge of faith, a great spiritual assurance. I mentioned to our helper that we were Americans. He turned in another direction and pushed me along for some time more, but now with direction. Finally, we rounded a corner and I saw our tent!

What an emotional reunion that was! The sisters cried and hugged us. The brothers hugged and thanked the African brother who had brought us back. Brother Ocei had been completely distraught, and was overwhelmed at my appearance. *Alhamdulillah*, Allah is most great.

The next three days were wonderful. The stoning [of the devil, which is meant to rid the world of evil] was performed by proxy for me by the brothers. We met many other pilgrims, and shared ethnic foods. During those times, my disability was a non-issue.

Back in Mecca, however, I began to suffer severe chills. Sitting on the hard bus seat for hours without medical attention had taken its toll. Someone suggested that I go to a nearby medical trailer set up for pilgrims, but when we got there, it was completely inaccessible. We decided to go to the hospital, but were greeted, again, by non-negotiable steps. The brothers decided to carry me into the hospital. There, I was examined by a congenial doctor who was thrilled to meet an American Muslim. He told me that I had a large, advanced necrosis decubitus, and that they could not treat it there as it required surgery. My condition was serious.

Our group still had four more days before we were to return home. Leaving the group and arranging a flight out was an impossibility. I realized that I would have to exert mind over matter—I could not die. I had two small sons to whom I must return to raise as Muslims. Sister Rasheedah and Sister Zainab cleaned and packed the decubitus with gauze. I prayed to Allah and begged Him to spare my life and to return me safely home.

Sheer faith and determination kept me going. I accompanied the group to Medina, endured the long bus ride, and felt elated to feel the warm peacefulness of the Prophet’s city. We prayed in the Prophet’s Mosque with a great sense of tranquility. But when we left, I made the terrible discovery that the bag contained all of my medical supplies was missing! All of the bags had been left on a security dolly outside the mosque. My bag was the only one missing. Everyone in the group searched high and low for that bag, on other dollies, inside other bags, even in the trash. There was no sign of it; it was gone!

I returned to Mecca ill, having chills and without any medical supplies, but still filled with determination to complete the remaining rituals of *hajj*. This time, I learned that I could circumambulate on the top floor of the Haram. The brothers took turns pushing me, and I managed to complete my farewell *tawaf*.

On the shuttle to Jeddah Airport, I endured one last difficulty. When the bus attendant placed me in a space beside the door, I quietly wheeled myself to a safer spot. The attendant came back to roughly and rudely fling me back to where he thought I should be. That area by the door was unsafe for even an able-bodied person, and certainly no place for a person in a wheelchair! With defiance born of my human dignity, I moved back

into the safer position, locked my chair into position and stared the bus attendant straight in the eyes. There I stayed.

*Alhamdulillah*, I made it safely back to Atlanta where I underwent two surgeries and remained in the hospital for eight weeks. My trip to Mecca had increased my gratitude to Allah for his loving kindness and mercy. I realized how difficult it is for disabled people who live in countries without legislation in favor of the disabled in areas of education, employment or housing. With a new appreciation for American technology and medical advances, too, I sense an obligation to share our knowledge with the rest of humanity. *In sha' Allah* [God willing], I pray that I might be instrumental in helping the Muslim community, both inside and outside of America, to be inclusive of everyone in the Islamic community.



Source: Betty Hasan Amin. "Hajj in a Wheelchair." *Azizah* 1, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 39–41, 43.

**Hajji Ali** (ca. 1828–1903) *camel driver, military veteran* In 1855, U.S. Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, the future and only president of the Confederate States of America, directed the U.S. MILITARY to explore the use of camels for both military and commercial purposes in the American Southwest. In 1856, military officials returned from a trip to the Middle East with 32 adult camels and three camel drivers, including Hajji Ali.

Ali's country of origin and exact birth date are unknown, though he may have been from Egypt and was born around 1828. His title, hajji, indicated that he had performed the hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, and/or that he was a person held in high esteem in his Middle Eastern hometown. Dubbed a "Bedouin-and-Camel Medicine Man" by his military sponsors, Hajji Ali joined army engineer Edward F. Beale in 1857 to explore the use of camels along a trail from Port Defiance, Texas, to California, which had been admitted as a state in 1850.

But Hajji Ali and other camel trainers were not paid for six months and went on strike at Camp Verde outside of San Antonio. They did not make the journey west with Beale, who filed a dispatch to Washington explaining that the camels were difficult to handle. The camels' feet, he said, were "literally cut to pieces by the dry, rocky ground of the Southwest."

Though Hajji Ali's career as a camel driver was prematurely brought to an end, he continued to work for the U.S.

Army as a scout. In 1880, Hajji Ali became a naturalized U.S. citizen and changed his name to Philip Tedro. He also married an American, Gertrude Serna, and they had two daughters. In 1889, he set out for Quartzsite, Arizona, where he prospected for gold.

Though Hajji Ali died in 1903, his legend was not forgotten in the American Southwest. In 1935, the Arizona Department of Highways raised a pyramid memorial on the site of his grave. At the crown of the pyramid, they placed a copper camel.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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**halal** See DIETARY LAWS; FOOD.

### Halveti-Jerrahi Order

In 1980, a charismatic 64-year-old Turkish man with sharp features and a face expressive of deep contemplation toured U.S. cities and performed mystical invocation ceremonies known as *dhikr*. This was Muzaffer Özak (1916–86), then the spiritual leader (sheikh) of the Halveti-Jerrahi Order of Dervishes, one of the many Sufi orders that have made their home in the United States since the 1960s. In 1977, he came from Turkey for the first time, and at the urging of several new disciples from America who had encountered him in Istanbul, where he owned a famous bookstore, he conducted the spiritual and worldly affairs of the Halveti-Jerrahi Order. The Halveti-Jerrahis, like other Sufi orders, had suffered from restrictions on their religious and social activities due to a ban on Sufi orders in Turkey since the 1920s. The Halveti-Jerrahi Order traces its lineage to its founding figure, Pir Nureddin al-Jerrahi (?–1721) and is a branch of the much older Khalwatiyya Order, whose hallmark spiritual practice was extended retreat (*khalwa*).

Özak sought to bring Sufi ideas and practices to the Western world to provide guidance for Westerners with spiritual inclinations and an alternative to Western materialism and spiritual decline. The American center of the order (which sees its global spiritual center in Istanbul, at the site where the past leaders of the order are buried) was built in Chestnut Ridge, New York. A beautiful structure, decorated with Ottoman tiles, the building has housed a mosque, community facilities, and offices for the local spiritual leader since its dedication in 1990. The community includes Turkish nationals who came to the United States already

affiliated with the order. In addition, several generations of American converts and spiritual seekers, as well as Muslims from other ethnic backgrounds, have been counted among its members and leaders. The leader of the American branch (including Canada and South America), Tosun Bayrak, came from Turkey in the 1950s as a student of ART history and has remained deeply connected to the Istanbul center of the order. This branch of the order has described itself as a traditional Muslim Sufi order, thereby distinguishing itself from other branches and groups that have a more ambivalent relationship with the Islamic origins and framework of Sufism.

Members of the order have engaged in spiritual practices but have also put heavy emphasis on charitable and relief activities in areas of disaster and war around the world, including in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, North Korea, Haiti, and Palestine. This service to humanity is not only an outward practice but is deeply linked to spiritual development and the cultivation of virtue and humility. Bayrak has not shied away from political statements and has encouraged members of the order to be engaged in the world, but not attached to it.

Shortly after the death of Özak in 1986, another branch was formed in New York City under the leadership of Nur al-Jerrahi, also known as Lex Hixon (1941–95), an American convert with a deep interest in interfaith dialogue and cross-religious experiences. The Nur-Ashki Jerrahi Order, which since his death in 1995 has been led by his widow, Fariha al-Jerrahi, has espoused a more universalist spiritual agenda and has put less emphasis on Muslim ritual practice and doctrine.

Juliane Hammer

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### Hammad, Suheir (1973– ) poet

Born on October 25, 1973, to Palestinian parents living in Amman, Jordan, poet Suheir Hammad moved with her family to Brooklyn, New York, at the age of five. One of the most powerful young voices in American POETRY in the early 21st century, Hammad was already well known within the Arab-American community and on the poetry and performance circuit before the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. But it was with her long 2001 poem, “First Writing Since,” that Hammad became a national figure.

“First Writing Since” is the testament of a New Yorker who, appalled by the destruction of her city, nonetheless refuses to give in to the calls for revenge. The power of “First Writing Sense” is that it is far more, but no less, than an antiwar poem. In it, Hammad speaks with an evocative and urgent power of the horror she feels about the attacks on the World Trade Center, remembering the many types of people who died there. And it also speaks of Hammad’s anger at the racism she and other brown people faced in the aftermath of 9/11. One key moment in this influential poem is an examination of what it means for her brother to be a Muslim and a member of the U.S. MILITARY, in the face of the wars that she expects to come. She wrote that “my heart stops when I try to pray—not a beat to disturb my fear.”

“First Writing Since,” along with Hammad’s earlier collection, *Born Palestinian, Born Black* (1996), led to an invitation from HIP-HOP entrepreneur Russell Simmons to participate in the Broadway production of Def Poetry Jam. As an original cast member, she won a Tony Award in 2003 and also toured the country for two years reading to thousands of youthful audiences.

In her writing, Hammad has consistently used what the critic Sirene Harb calls “combinatorial poetics.” Deeply rooted in her experience as a Palestinian American, Hammad’s links to the African-American community and to the multiracial world of New York have been evident in her work. Her style and poetic references have drawn on the Black Arts movement, evoking themes of black liberation grounded in African-American cultural and political history. In *Zaatar Diva* (2006), for example, the poem “Daddy Song” describes her father’s love of Sam Cooke’s rhythm-and-blues music and his emotional reaction when he heard Cooke’s “A Change Is Gonna Come” (1964) and watched the film *Malcolm X* (1992). “You cried in your easy boy reclining / your head better to listen,” she wrote of her father.

“Daddy Song” was typical for Hammad, who identifies Palestinian suffering through the lens of the African-American experience. But Hammad goes further with her commitment to combination and solidarity; she mixes references to the lives of her neighbors, the suffering of people in Haiti and Palestine, and the experiences of Native Americans, African Americans, and Asian Americans. As she told interviewer Christopher Brown in *The Electronic Intifada* (2006): “And so for me, growing up, with Puerto Rican, Black and poor White kids, . . . I became interested in the other stories. . . . I automatically took language to be my tool. That was the tool that I was going to use to illuminate the shadow areas and give voice to the voiceless.”

By 2009, Hammad had published two collections of poetry, as well as her first book, a short poetic memoir, *Drops of This Story* (1996). Her poetry had been reproduced in dozens of collections. Hammad had also produced two



plays (*Re-Orientalism* and *Blood Trinity*). She has received multiple awards and fellowships, including the Audre Lorde Writing Award (twice), the 2001 Emerging Artist Award from the Asian/Pacific/American Studies Institute at New York University, and the 2005 Sister of Fire Award.

Melani McAlister

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**Hamid, Yusuf Muzaffaruddin** See ISLAMIC PARTY OF NORTH AMERICA.

**Hart-Celler Act** See IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965.

### Hashmi, Zarina (1937– ) artist

Born in Aligarh, India, in 1937, the artist Zarina Hashmi, known in the art world simply as Zarina, was among the first Muslim women to break into the otherwise competitive and exclusive New York art scene. Educated at Aligarh Muslim University, where she earned a B.Sc. Honors in 1958, she went on to study printmaking in India and then in Paris, France, at Atelier-17 with S. W. Hayter from 1963 to 1967. She continued her studies in woodblock printmaking on a Japan Foundation Fellowship at Toshi Yoshido Studio, Tokyo, in 1974.

For most of her life, Zarina has traveled, and her peripatetic life has become the very theme of her artworks. The central theme of her art is the home, real and imagined, and is reflected conceptually and formally through her work. Places of transit, borders, cities, countries, maps, and migration are all subjects of her art and life. Her prints, which are visually spare, are dense with meaning, consistent not only with a formal minimalist aesthetic, but reflective of the nomadic life she has lived. For example, *Atlas of My World* (2001), a woodcut on handmade paper, depicts the various countries that have shaped the artist's diasporic life. Part of the work sold for £6,000 British (\$8,925) at Sotheby's in 2008.

Islam, especially various traditions of Sufism, alongside her love of mathematics and architecture, have grounded her

work in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Urdu words, passages from the QUR'AN, and Sufi meditations have provided both personal guidance and material for her art. For example, *Horizon*, the final piece of a 2005 exhibition at Bose Pacia in New York City, featured a single line that divided a black field from a white field, an image that art critic Holland Cotter said "suggested infinity in two directions." The image is accompanied by a verse of the Qur'an: "And we shall show them our signs in the horizons and in their own souls." According to Cotter, "It is a fitting inscription for an immensely interior art."

A practicing artist and an art teacher for many years, Zarina has been awarded art residencies at Art-Omi in Omi, New York; the Women's Studio Workshop in Rosendale, New York; and the Montalvo Residency in Saratoga, California. She has also held faculty positions at the New York Feminist Art Institute, Bennington College, Cornell University, University of California Santa Cruz, New York University, and the New School in New York.

A major retrospective of her work, "Weaving Memory 1990–2006," exhibited at Bose Pacia Gallery in Mumbai, India, in 2007. Other solo retrospectives include "Silent Soliloquy" at Bodhi Art, Singapore (2006), and "Counting 1977–2005," at Bose Pacia Modern, New York (2005).

Zarina's works are included in permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; and the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, India. Since the 1970s, she has lived and worked in New York City.

Munir Jiwa

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### Hassen, Aliya (1910–1990) community activist and writer

A pioneering Muslim-American leader, Aliya Hassen not only advocated for women's leadership among immigrant Muslims, she also challenged the generational and racial divides that arose in the 1960s as many Muslim immigrants

arrived in the United States. She was born on April 30, 1910, in Kadoka, South Dakota. Her parents were first-generation immigrants from Lebanon. In 1925, Hassen left South Dakota to attend the Briggs Boarding School in DETROIT. She married the year before she left.

In the 1950s, she moved to NEW YORK CITY, where she earned a private investigator's license and eventually served as the civil defense director of the borough of Brooklyn's 82nd Precinct. During this period, Hassan focused on improving relations among Sunni Muslims and members of the NATION OF ISLAM, attempting to forge ties between Arab Muslims abroad with African-American Muslims. During this era, she led a group of African Americans on a tour to meet Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918–70), president of Egypt, and in the 1960s assisted MALCOLM X (1925–65) in planning for his historic 1964 pilgrimage to Mecca.

In 1972, Hassen returned to Detroit, where she became a volunteer director for the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS), which assisted newly arrived immigrants from Lebanon, Palestine, and Yemen in adjusting to their environment, obtaining basic services, and finding adequate housing, among other social services. She served as an unpaid director of the organization for 10 years and received numerous awards recognizing her significant community service, including the Jefferson Award. Although she stepped down from the post in 1982, she remained involved in ACCESS as a member of the executive board until her death. The library at ACCESS was named in her honor.

Hassen was an outspoken advocate for women's equality and participation in community affairs long before the late 20th-century wave of academic FEMINISM. She wrote a three-part series for *Muslim Life*, the journal of the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, detailing how the history of sexism among Muslims contradicted the ideals of Islam. As a prolific writer, she produced both published and unpublished manuscripts entitled *The Crescent and the Cross*, *Good Eating with Muslims around the World*, *The 101 Questions Most Frequently Asked of Muslims* (1959), *Wives of the Prophet Muhammed* (1959), and *Religious Stories for Young Muslims*, all of which are available in the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library. Her speeches, poetry, Middle East travel journal, correspondences with Malcolm X, and even the hate mail she received are also included in the collection, still largely unused by scholars.

Hassen died on May 24, 1990. Ignoring the Islamic FUNERAL traditions regarding burial, she had asked to be cremated. It was the determined, final choice of a woman who had always selected for herself which parts of Muslim and American cultures she was willing to accept and observe.

*May Alhassen*

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### Hathout, Hassan Muhammad (1924–2009)

*physician, community activist*

An Egyptian physician who spent much of his career in Kuwait, Hassan Hathout came to the United States in his retirement. Settling in the greater LOS ANGELES area in 1988, he devoted himself to writing and community development and became a well-known spokesperson for Islam in Southern California. Though he immigrated late in life, he gave full-throated endorsement to the idea that Muslim Americans must embrace their identities as both religious Muslims and patriotic Americans.

Hassan Hathout was born in Shibin al-Kum, Munufiyyah, Egypt, in December 1924, during a period of great political and economic change in Egypt. Hathout's early years were shaped by a colonial administration in which British imperial forces attempted to thwart democratic political reform and manage, to their advantage, the decade-old Egyptian attempts at economic development. While pursuing his undergraduate medical education at Cairo University and Ain Shams University, Hathout became involved in the Muslim Brotherhood, a religio-political movement that aimed to reform Egyptian society and government according to its interpretation of Islam. His winning combination of oratorical eloquence, a gift for POETRY, and a solid moral reputation made him a popular figure during his college days, when he was elected to the Higher Executive Committee for University Students.

In December 1947, shortly after graduating from the Faculty of Medicine at Cairo University, he was hired by the Red Crescent to serve at its hospital in Ramallah, Palestine. Witnessing the fighting between Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews, he offered medical attention to civilians and soldiers alike from all warring parties. In recognition of his efforts, Israeli authorities ordered their troops to protect him and his hospital during their invasion of the West Bank in 1948.

Between 1952 and 1965, Hathout dedicated himself to finishing his postgraduate studies, eventually earning a Ph.D.

from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1965. In the early 1970s, the University of Kuwait invited him to join the team that established its school of medicine, and from 1973 to 1988, Hathout served as the founding professor of obstetrics and gynecology. During that time, he published more than 100 journal articles, including research about Islamic and Muslim approaches to medicine. He also served as a member of the Ethics Committee for Obstetrics and Gynecology for the World Health Organization from 1981 to 1988.

In 1988, Hathout retired and immigrated to the United States, where he joined his brother, MAHER HATHOUT, in working to create a Muslim community that views the United States as its permanent home. Hathout developed a deep interest in INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS. Speaking before many interfaith gatherings hosted by churches and synagogues such as Los Angeles's Wilshire Temple, Rev. Robert Schueller's Crystal Cathedral, and the United Methodist Church of Pasadena, he preached that love underlies all true religious belief and that Muslims should counter ignorance or fear of Islam with love. Hate, he said, only engenders more hate. In his *Audible Silence, Thoughts and Remembrance of a Muslim Elder*, Hathout preached the message that common classifications of human beings into black and white, east and west, south and north, rich and poor, educated and non-educated have to be replaced by a single classification: those with a loving heart and those with a hating heart. Delivering this message in hundreds of speeches and Friday sermons in mosques throughout California, he urged Muslims to become "soldiers of life and love." As a prominent public spokesperson for the Muslim community in Southern California, he also gave numerous interviews on local and national TV and radio stations.

Hathout received numerous awards, including the Olive Branch Award, given by the American Friends Service Committee of Los Angeles in 2001, and the Life Changer Award, given by Initiatives of Change USA and the city of Allentown, Pennsylvania, in 2005, both in recognition of Hathout's efforts to foster peace and harmony among peoples of the Abrahamic religions.

Hathout educated many Muslims, especially the younger generation, through his various publications and writings. His well-known *Reading the Muslim Mind* presents an anatomy of Islam where meanings of basic Islamic doctrines and concepts such as *'aqidah*, creed, *shari'a*, *jihad*, morality, and democracy, among others, are explained. The book attempts to draw a path that can lead Muslims and non-Muslims alike to better understand the religion of Islam and its principles of love, justice, and human dignity.

Hathout also encouraged Muslim Americans to become active in POLITICS and civic affairs, asserting that Muslims could help to make the United States a more moral and compassionate nation. He stressed the need for Muslim

Americans to develop their own community leaders, rather than to rely on religious authorities from the Middle East or the Indian subcontinent, and has declared that they should sever their relationships with political and ideological movements outside the United States. Hathout died in Los Angeles on April 25, 2009.

Said Abdelrahman

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### Hathout, Maher Muhammad (1936– )

*physician, community activist*

Since immigrating to the United States from his native Egypt in 1971, Maher Hathout has become a public advocate on behalf of American Islamic organizations. His advocacy work, like that of his brother, HASSAN MUHAMMAD HATHOUT, has sought to promote a positive image of Islam as a religion of peace and tolerance. He has also urged Muslims to take concrete steps toward lasting civic engagement in American life and has led Muslim participation in numerous INTERFAITH dialogues and community service projects.

Maher Hathout was born on January 1, 1936, in Shibin al-Kum, Munufiyyah, Egypt, to a middle-class family strongly supportive of the Egyptian nationalist movement, which sought independence from British imperial control. In 1960, Hathout earned a medical degree from Cairo University, becoming an internist and a cardiologist. After Egypt's defeat in the 1967 Six Days' War between Israel and its Arab neighbors, Hathout became a public opponent of the Egyptian regime, declaring President Gamal Abdel Nasser to be a dictator. Fearful of persecution, he fled to Kuwait, where he lived for three years.

In 1971, Hathout migrated to the United States, where he continued his medical practice, specializing in internal medicine and cardiovascular disease in Duarte, California. He later became a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and a member of the American College of Physicians. Hathout also served as a staff physician at the Veterans Administration hospital in Loma Linda, California, and was appointed assistant professor of medicine at Loma Linda University.

While working in medicine, he became involved with the Islamic Center of Southern California (ICSC), one of the oldest Islamic institutions in LOS ANGELES. Hathout

advocated a fresh vision of Muslim life in the United States that considerably influenced its ideology. ICSC became an inclusive place of worship, welcoming Muslims of all sectarian preferences, and strived for GENDER inclusiveness in its governance and activities. Hathout became an intellectual voice calling on Muslim immigrants to see the United States as a *watan*—“homeland” in Arabic—not as a place of exile. He declared that a *watan* is where one’s grandchildren are born and not where one’s grandfathers were buried. In this vein, he warned Muslim-American groups against accepting funding from foreign governments or organizations. He also asserted that Islam is applicable in all times and places, and that it is capable of adjusting to the diverse circumstances in which it is practiced. The United States, he said, was fertile ground for the establishment of a vibrant and influential Muslim community.

In the first decade of the 21st century, Hathout served as a senior adviser to the MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL (MPAC), established in 1988 to advocate for Islamic ethical values within the American political process and to prepare young Muslims to assume responsibility as leaders in American public life. He also served, from 1998 to 2005, as vice chairman of the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California, which sought to coordinate the activities of various Muslim groups.

From 1987 to 1990, Hathout was a commissioner in the Los Angeles County Department of Social Services and a member of the Chancellors Committee at the University of California, Los Angeles. He was a founding member of the Muslim Catholic Dialogue in 1987 and of Interfaith Coalition for Peace in 1990. Since 1998, he has been a member of the board of directors of the Interfaith Alliance and a charter member of the Pacific Council on International Policy. In 2001, he worked with Los Angeles interfaith leaders, such as Rabbi Steven Jacobs of Temple Kol Tikvah and Rabbi John Rosove of Temple Israel, on a “Code of Ethics” for Muslim-Jewish dialogue. The code was signed and displayed in Los Angeles City Hall.

Throughout his career, Hathout has been criticized for his political views, including his stance on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, by, among others, the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, the American Jewish Committee (AJC), and the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), which accused him of supporting terrorism. These accusations arose mainly because of his early public speeches in which he severely criticized Israel for the occupation of Palestinian lands. When he was nominated by the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations for the John Allen Buggs Award for excellence in human relations, Hathout’s critics contested his nomination on the basis of these political views. But support from various American interfaith leaders and institutions such as Rabbi Steven Jacobs and the Wilshire

Boulevard Temple helped Hathout weather the criticism. He was eventually granted the award in September 2006.

Hathout, whose career in medicine has been overshadowed by his efforts as activist and advocate, has helped to bring Islam to the forefront of American public life. His tireless work over the last 30 years on behalf of America-Islamic organizations has contributed to their heightened presence and influence in American politics. Hathout’s advocacy—characterized by his insistent urging that Muslims embrace their American identity and work to secure a place in American society alongside other major faiths—has been bolstered by an abiding willingness to seek out these major faith groups for public dialogue.

Said Abdelrahman

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### health care

Muslim American communities reflect the diversity of culture, language, and religious practices of Muslims around the globe. Muslim physicians and nurses are leaders in some of the most prestigious U.S. medical institutions. Muslim health-care workers inherit and develop the historical tradition of “Islamic medicine” in many different ways. Like a majority of Americans, Muslims combine a number of complementary and alternative health practices and understandings in their daily lives. According to author Amy Rowe, Muslims in Boston shared “the ability to draw upon biomedical and scientific approaches, traditional Islamic medicine, folk practices, American social service orientations, and scriptural commandments in a noncontradictory and fluid manner.” These combinations of science, culture, and religion have resulted in several strands of Muslim-American health care.

According to a famous saying of the prophet MUHAMMAD, God said, “We did not send down any disease, unless we have sent down the remedy with it.” In Islamic tradition, God is thus the creator of both disease and cure. Human beings must bear the suffering that comes with disease as a test from God that eliminates the effects of sin. At the same time, they must seek the cure that God has provided. The QUR’AN likewise states, “We send down (stage by stage) in the Qur’an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe” (17:82). The revealed word has a special power to protect people from



evil influences during times when they are vulnerable and to heal them when they are ill. Verses of the Qur'an may be recited over someone who is sick, they may be written down and placed in amulets (protective objects worn like jewelry), or they are sometimes written with ink or powder that can be dissolved in water and drunk as a holy tonic. Texas cancer specialist Fazlur Rahman wrote about his childhood experience of having a painful boil on his head, for which a Muslim imam, or religious leader, treated him with holy water and an amulet. His grandmother told him afterward, "You have a divine text in your head. It portends your good future."

Common spiritual healing techniques such as reciting scripture and repeating the names of God are important, but they represent only one aspect of Muslim health practices. Other elements of Muslim religious healing in the United States have included the development of an Islamic code of ethics for health-care practitioners and the use of "prophetic medicine," using the teachings of both the Qur'an and the prophet Muhammad that are related to diet and conduct, as well as natural and spiritual cures for ailments. Some Muslim Americans have also stressed the importance of "Islamic medicine," which often refers to the rich historical tradition of Muslim philosophers, scientists, and physicians who translated and developed Greek, Persian, Ayurvedic, and Chinese medical texts and procedures. Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and al-Razi (Rhazes) are two Muslim physicians whose works formed the basis of medical education throughout the Middle East, Central Asia, and Europe until the 16th century, before the development of modern "scientific" medicine.

#### THE FIRST MUSLIM HEALTH-CARE WORKERS

Moroccan-born ESTEVANICO, who accompanied the Spanish expedition of Pánfilo de Narváez in 1527–28, was perhaps the first Muslim-American healer in North America. He and three companions arrived in Mexico City in 1536 with a fabulous tale of survival as the former slaves of indigenous Americans. After living naked and eating seasonal foods for six years, they escaped. Posing as medicine men, they crossed what is today the American Southwest, healing indigenous peoples and attracting a large following. Though elements of the story may be fictional, its cultural significance for Muslim-American history should not be lost: The adoption and modification of new healing traditions was part of the Muslim-American imagination from the beginning of their history in the Americas.

Another historical root of Muslim health care in the Americas is the 16th-century humoral medicine that Spanish settlers brought with them to the Americas. Arising out of the INTERFAITH, multicultural environment of Islamic Spain (711–1492), humoral medicine (also sometimes called Greek medicine, because of its roots in ancient Greece) involves maintaining the proper balance of the body's "humors" (hot

and cold, dry and moist substances) through natural techniques and herbal medicines. Hispanic and Latino communities in the Americas have continued to practice such home remedies, balancing "hot" and "cold" blood and other bodily fluids through ingesting special foods or applying hot or cold compresses to the body. Not coincidentally, this humoral medicine is also practiced by *hakims* (wise persons) and taught in medical schools in South Asia, which has also been influenced by the same international Islamic networks of science and learning that shaped Spanish medicine.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVE traditions of healing are another historical root of Muslim-American health care. Muslim slaves such as OMAR IBN SAID and ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA regularly recited and wrote down verses of the Qur'an in asking God to protect their bodies from physical harm and abusive labor. They also clothed themselves in recognizably Islamic garb, such as turbans or robes, to obtain a special and ultimately protected status as a more "civilized" slave—many slaveholders were also amateur ethnographers who thought of Muslims not as West Africans but as northwest African Moors.

Muslim-American slaves used several sacred objects to protect their bodies from illness and ill fate. Slaves who lived off the GEORGIA SEACOAST used prayer beads to invoke the name of God and seek God's protection over themselves and their communities. Though archaeological evidence is still needed to verify fully such claims, Muslim slaves also probably repeated the practice of using amulets to ward off illness, both of the body and of the spirit. In West Africa, Muslim practitioners regularly asked their sheikhs, or religious leaders, to write verses of the Qur'an and place them inside the amulet to protect them from evils of all kinds. Another common practice among West Africans was the literal consumption of the ink used to write Qur'anic verses on paper. The verses would be written on paper, water would be applied to the text, and the brew would be poured into a vessel and drunk.

Some Muslim-American slaves also practiced what is often called conjure or hoodoo, folk practices that drew on the powers of nature to heal and harm others. Though evidence exists from the Georgia seacoast that those Muslims more formally educated in Islamic religion saw such practices as superstitious and sacrilegious, many Muslims or those influenced by West African Islam may have combined certain Islamic practices—such as using prayer beads—with occult practices, like using the blood of slain chickens to perform magic. In addition, Muslim-American slaves, like all slaves, brought with them knowledge of "roots," or herbal medicines, from their homelands. Root workers played an important role in treating illnesses among the enslaved peoples in the American South, using herbs to treat physical, emotional, and spiritual illness all at once.

### MODERN BLACK MUSLIM HEALTH-CARE TRADITIONS

African Americans began to revive Islamic traditions of health care in the early 20th century. The MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, begun by NOBLE DREW ALI in 1925, actively sold herbal remedies like Moorish Mineral and Healing Oil, and Moorish Body Builder and Blood Purifier, as a tonic for “rheumatism, lung trouble, rundown constitutions, indigestion, and loss of manhood.” AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS may have seen these tonics as part of the wisdom passed down from African ancestors or adopted from “Oriental” healers, or both.

Like the Moorish Science Temple, the NATION OF ISLAM focused on healing the mind, body, and spirit of black Americans of what the movement saw as the physical and mental poisoning that had resulted during the era of slavery and Jim Crow, or legal racial segregation. In his two-volume *How to Eat to Live* (1967), Nation of Islam leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD set strict dietary rules for the movement, prohibiting “soul food” associated with slave culture as well as pork and alcohol. He advised eating one meal per day, avoiding starches, eating less red meat and processed foods, and eating more whole grain products, vegetables, fish, and poultry. Dentist Leo X Muhammad also wrote numerous articles for the Nation of Islam newspaper *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS* in which he encouraged oral hygiene as part of a healthy Muslim lifestyle. Though Elijah Muhammad’s son, W. D. MOHAMMED, led most of the Nation of Islam members to accept Sunni Islam in the late 1970s and questioned much of his father’s dietary advice, he continued to emphasize that a Muslim’s whole life is regulated and disciplined, including diet, hygiene, and prayer.

By the beginning of the 21st century, African-American Muslims of all denominations continued to stress the healing of mind, body, and spirit as part of their religious and spiritual lives. Reflecting broader health trends in black America, some African-American Muslims focused on the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS in the black community. Confronting the crisis of diabetes and heart disease in urban communities, African-American Muslims participated in various community efforts to spread awareness and provide dietary alternatives to the fast-food restaurants that served foods high in fat, sugar, and sodium. Various Muslim entrepreneurs also sold body oils meant to heal the body of illness, and religious leaders and study groups in neighborhoods such as South Central LOS ANGELES plumbed the depth of the Qur’an and the traditions of the prophet Muhammad for wisdom on what and how to eat.

### IMMIGRANT MUSLIMS

Middle Easterners began immigrating to the Midwestern and Northeastern United States in the late 19th century, but the majority of Arab immigrants were Christian. By the 1950s,

however, an increasing numbers of international students were doing graduate work in engineering and science in the United States. In 1958, Abdel Rahim Omran, an Egyptian studying at Columbia University in New York City, presented a paper to the American Public Health Association about a new technique for using simple skin tests among a Navajo group to identify families in need of treatment for tuberculosis. In 1961, a group of Arab-American physicians in California formed a group called the U.S. Organization for Medical and Education Needs (OMEN) to provide humanitarian assistance to orphans and refugees in the Middle East.

The creation of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965 changed the U.S. health-care system drastically. Medical insurance changes led American-born physicians to establish private practices in wealthier suburbs, leaving a major gap in inner-city and rural areas. The government sought to fill this gap by encouraging immigration of medical professionals from other countries. By 1972, 46 percent of all new licensed physicians in the United States had been trained abroad. By 1974, one-fifth of all U.S. physicians were international medical graduates (IMGs), as were one-third of all hospital resident trainees. Many of these IMGs came from India, Pakistan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iran, and a large number of them were Muslims.

In 1967, Mobin Akhtar and Amjad Ali led a small group of Muslim physicians associated with the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION to form a network called the Muslim Medical Association. This organization later became the Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA), providing resources to Muslim medical professionals, promoting Islamic ethics and values, and organizing international relief work. Future IMANA president Shahid Athar graduated from medical school in India and came to CHICAGO in 1969 for graduate training in internal medicine. He then studied endocrinology at Indiana University, before beginning his practice at the St. Vincent hospital in Indianapolis in 1974, where he has continued to treat patients and mentor medical students. Athar has become a popular international speaker on Islamic medical ethics and the role of spirituality in medicine.

Salam Shahidi, a microbiologist from Pakistan, completed graduate degrees in Wisconsin and Missouri. He served as research scientist at the New York Department of Public Health from 1967 until his death in 1992. Shahidi was a national leader of the Pakistan League of America and the National Association of Pakistani Americans.

The so-called brain drain of medical professionals who left the Middle East and South Asia for the United States sparked several organizations to provide medical aid for their homelands. Like the Arab-American US OMEN in the 1960s, the Arab-American Medical Association formed in 1974 to provide medical aid in the Middle East. Organized in 1977, the Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North

America (APPNA) began to develop medical and educational assistance programs in Pakistan. The North American Arab Medical Association, APPNA, and IMANA all provide ways for American Muslims to improve health-care services and education in the United States and abroad.

As these organizations have grown, their members have also become more integrated into medical leadership in the United States. Former IMANA president Farouque Khan, a Pakistani-American pulmonologist on Long Island, New York, was elected in 1995 to the Board of Regents for the American College of Physicians (ACP), the first international medical graduate to serve in this position. In 1997, he persuaded the ACP to hold a joint convention with IMANA in Amman, Jordan. He celebrated this milestone when “IMANA enter[ed] the mainstream of American Medicine” with the phrase “we moved from the outhouse to the main house.”

Muslims have taken other important leadership roles in mainstream health care. Mohammed Sayeed Quraishi received a career achievement award from the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland in 1988. Abdel Rahim Omran has led World Health Organization (WHO)

projects among Muslims throughout the world since the publication of his *Family Planning in the Legacy of Islam* (1992). And Pakistani-American Muhammad Akhter, who served as director of public health for Washington, D.C., from 1991 to 1994, and president of the American Public Health Association from 1997 to 2002, was appointed in 2007 to direct the National Medical Association, which represents 30,000 African-American physicians. Arguably, the most high-profile Muslim-American health-care professional in the history of American medicine is ELIAS ZERHOUNI, an Algerian-American physician who served as director of the National Institutes of Health from 2002 to 2008.

With a second generation of immigrant Muslim health professionals now emerging, young Muslims are moving toward leadership of these older organizations and creating new organizations. African-American social worker Aneesah Nadir helped to found the Islamic Social Service Association in 1999. Nurse Rose Khalifa founded the National American Arab Nurses Association in 2003, and health finance professional Arshia Wajid formed a listserv in 2004 that has grown rapidly to become the Association of Muslim Health Professionals.



National Institutes of Health (NIH) director Elias Zerhouni welcomes President George W. Bush to the NIH for discussions on health-care policy in 2005. ([www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov))



### MUSLIM COMMUNITY HEALTH-CARE ORGANIZATIONS AND LEADERS

Muslim Americans began to develop special clinics and social services in the late 1980s. Early projects in which Muslim health-care providers played an active role served particular ethnic communities. The ACCESS Community Health and Research Center in Dearborn, Michigan, began operation in 1988 to focus on medical, public-health, and mental health initiatives and research relevant to the burgeoning Arab community. The Hamdard Center in Chicago was formed in 1992 to provide physical, emotional, and psychological health services to South Asian, Middle Eastern, and Bosnian communities in Illinois.

Several Muslim community-based health projects began in the 1990s. School psychologist Shamim Ibrahim formed NISWA (Arabic, "women") in 1990 to assist with the mental health, domestic violence, and social service needs of Muslim families in LOS ANGELES. Twelve Muslim doctors in Potomac, Maryland, began the Ibn Sina clinic in the early 1990s for patients without health insurance, and two physicians in Sacramento, California, began the Shifa Clinic at the V Street Mosque for low-income Muslims.

In 1996, second-generation Muslim-American medical students led by Rushdie Cader founded the University Muslim Medical Association (UMMA) Community Clinic to serve a primarily African-American and Latina/o community in South Central Los Angeles in 1996. Muslim Family Services of Detroit was founded in 1998 by the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA to provide marital counseling and psychotherapy for the Muslim community. The Nizari ISMA'ILI community of Houston, Texas, opened the Ibn Sina Foundation Clinic in 2001, and community activist Azher Quader, a urologist in Chicago, founded the Compassionate Care Network (2004), which depends on health-care providers who offer low-cost primary care in their own private clinics. Other Muslim-initiated community health programs have been developing in Chicago, Baltimore, northern Virginia, Las Vegas, Buffalo, and elsewhere, building on the models established by these pioneering organizations.

### MUSLIMS AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINES

Since the 1970s, complementary and alternative therapies have gained popularity alongside advances in medical health care. Sufi leader Hakim Ghulam Moinuddin Chishti (formerly Robert Thomson) published *Natural Medicine* (1978) and began promoting a two-year training program in Tucson, Arizona, for people who wanted to practice "prophetic medicine." In 1985, he published *The Book of Sufi Healing*, in which he laid out the principles of Sufi life, the practices of Sufi meditation, the healing powers contained in the five pillars of Muslim life, and formulas for various herbal remedies. In *The Traditional Healer's Handbook*

(1991), he asserted that humoral medicine and Sufi spirituality are able to combine Ayurvedic, Chinese, Persian, and Greek medical wisdom to provide practical remedies, diet, and lifestyle guidance.

Hakima Karima Kristie Burns began offering advice and consultations on herbal therapies in 1989, creating the Herb'n Muslim Web site (and later the Dream Angel Store). Originally from Iowa, she reportedly "healed herself from asthma, allergies, panic attacks, depression, hypoglycemia, and dysmenorrhea using only natural therapies and herbs." Thus began her pilgrimage in search of traditional medical knowledge in Egypt and formal training in therapies like iridology and reflexology. She has also written numerous articles about the Islamic basis of acupuncture and herbal medicines.

In mosques and at Muslim gatherings across the United States, vendors sell health products that contain ingredients such as "black seed" (*nigella sativa*) recommended by the prophet Muhammad as a healing for all diseases. This herbal medicine purportedly boosts the immune system and restores heat to a weakened body. While Somali Muslims may buy their black seed from an ethnic grocer to prepare as a tea or with rice, others buy bottles, capsules, or throat lozenges containing black seed oil. Honey also plays a major role in the diet and natural medicine practices of Muslims from various cultures.

Husain Nagamia, a cardiac surgeon in Brandon, Florida, convinced the leaders of IMANA to create the International Institute of Islamic Medicine in 1992. He has since commissioned the translation of classical Islamic medical texts and developed Web-based materials, a journal, and teaching resources for the study of history of Islamic medicine. While less concerned with the current practice of traditional medicines, the institute is yet another way that Muslim Americans have celebrated their cultural contribution in the health-care field.

During her 2001 research in Boston, Noor Kassamali met Muslim immigrant women from several different countries who called on Bibi Fatima, daughter of the Prophet, to help protect the emotional and physical health of their families. These women-only gatherings involved prayers to God, requests for help from Fatima, sharing stories and songs about Fatima, and eating special foods. Among immigrant and refugee women, these gatherings for spiritual healing offer important connections to their culture and provide strength for daily family care duties.

### HEALTH-CARE CONCERNS OF MUSLIMS

In the context of North American clinics and hospitals, Muslims often have general concerns about being treated with dignity and respect. Muslim men and women often prefer a doctor or nurse of the same sex to perform a physical



examination, out of concern for modesty. Medical problems involving an inability to control the flow of blood, urine, or feces may make it difficult for observant Muslims to perform important religious rituals. Maintaining purity of body and mind through avoiding alcohol and pork are also important concerns for Muslims in the hospital setting. Islamic ethical principles and cultural values influence decisions about abortion, circumcision, screening for birth defects, living with disability, care at the end of life, and organ donation. A number of Muslim organizations have published pamphlets and manuals since the 1990s to help hospitals care for Muslim patients in more sensitive ways.

While Islamic religious beliefs and practices generally support healthy lifestyles and avoidance of risky behaviors, many Muslim communities have experienced a rise in domestic violence, divorce, smoking, drug use, and sexually transmitted diseases. Both the UMMA and ACCESS clinics have participated in research to make breast cancer screening more acceptable to Muslim and other women from Middle Eastern and South Asian cultures. Young health professionals founded Muslim Mental Health in 2004 to advance mental health outreach to Muslim communities and to study the mental and physical health effects of increased discrimination and harassment that many Muslims have experienced since the SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, attacks.

Understanding health care in the Muslim-American community involves an appreciation for the diverse ways that immigrant and U.S.-born Muslims combine religion, science, and culture. The historical legacy of spiritual healing through the revealed word of the Qur'an, the example and teaching of the prophet Muhammad, and various forms of Islamic healing systems provide Muslim Americans with a wealth of opportunities and challenges to serve the health-care needs of their own families and of their non-Muslim neighbors.

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### *hijab*

The Arabic word *hijab* means “screen,” “curtain,” or “separation.” The word, which appears in Qur’an 24:30–31 and 33:53, has been interpreted traditionally by scholars of the SHARI‘A, a Muslim code of law and ethics, as a religious requirement. In actual practice, however, some Muslims, including Muslim Americans, have ignored this interpretation, applied it only when making PRAYER, or explained it as a general call to modesty without specific instruction as to how to DRESS. Historically speaking, *hijab* referred to modesty for both sexes and separation of the sexes in social settings. As it referred to dress, *hijab* included all of the garments a Muslim woman wore when she covered her head and body in loose, nontransparent clothing. More narrowly defined, the *hijab* was the scarf or veil that a Muslim woman wore over her hair.

Muslim-American women have donned the *hijab* since slave times. For example, in a 1930s interview with Sapelo Island resident Katie Brown, a descendant of a Muslim slave named Bilali Mahomet, Brown recalled her grandmother talking about the scarf: “She am tie uh head up lak I does, but she weah a loose wite clawt da she trow obuh uh head

lak veil an it hang loose on uh shoulduh.” But the *hijab* faded in popularity in the early 20th century and did not regain its prominent place in Muslim-American life until the late 20th century, during an era of religious REVIVALISM.

By the end of the 20th century, some Muslim-American women had embraced a synthesis of *hijab* and modern styles. Retailers began to cultivate a largely untapped market of conservatively dressed Muslim women. In 2005, for example, Nordstrom hosted a show in McLean, Virginia, called “Interpreting Hot Trends for Veiled and Conservative Women.” Similarly, international designers began reaching out to Muslim women at the Dubai International Fashion Week.

Several new designers were provided new veiling styles for women. Brooke Samad, an American designer, established Marabo clothing, while Rabia Zargarpur, also known as Rabia Z., used Adidas accessories in her 2008 line of conservative dress. The Eva Khurshid line was marketed not only to Muslims but to any career women who wanted to combine fashion with modesty.

Some Muslim Americans rejected these forays into style and fashion, stating that they were not legitimate expressions



Women wearing the *hijab* at the American Muslim Day Parade in New York City in 2008 (David Grossman/Alamy)

of *hijab*. More conservative Muslims said that flash and glitz belong in the home, and that clothing that called attention to itself or that fit the body a little more closely than traditional clothing was not real *hijab*.

While gains were being made by American *hijabis*, or *hijab* wearers, in the fashion world, some Muslim-American women faced DISCRIMINATION as a result of wearing a *hijab* in public spaces and in the workplace. A new policy at Navy Federal Credit Union in Maryland, for example, prohibited hats, sunglasses, and hoodies in an effort to deter robberies and identity theft. This led to two incidents in which Kenza Shelley was asked in February 2009 to go to a backroom to receive service. She had been a customer there for 10 years. The credit union apologized to Shelley while reaffirming its commitment to its policy.

The limited acceptance of *hijab* in the workplace has also caused Muslim women to consider dress codes when making career choices. Some Muslim women give up *hijab* to pursue their careers for fear of hitting the glass ceiling. In July 2007, Shereen Attia filed a discrimination lawsuit against Whitehall Jewelers in California's Solano County Superior Court. Attia stated that she had worked for the same manager before in another store and had been invited by him to apply to the Whitehall store. When she submitted her application, after she had begun to wear *hijab*, she was denied a job. Whitehall settled with Attia in 2008. The judgment was sealed.

Kimberlee Webb of PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania, was a police officer who sought to wear a "breakaway *hijab*" secured with Velcro that would show only on the back of her neck, the rest being concealed under her uniform and not placing the officer in jeopardy while on duty. The police department denied the request and Webb sued. In April 2009, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a lower court ruling against Webb.

Between November 2007 and December 2008, three Muslim women—Halimah Abdullah, Sabreen Abdul-Rahman, and Lisa Valentine (whose Muslim name is Miedah)—were barred or arrested for attempting to enter the Municipal Court of Judge Keith Rollins in Douglasville, Georgia. In Judge Rollins's court, a strict policy of no headgear without religious exception was maintained. After all of the attendant publicity, the Douglasville police force, Judge Rollins, and court personnel attended a cultural diversity class.

Ginnah Muhammad lost a federal appeal of her case in 2008. In Michigan, Judge Paul Parnuk had thrown out Muhammad's small claims case against a rental car company. At the small claims hearing in 2006, Muhammad had refused to remove her *niqab*, which left only her eyes visible, in the courtroom. Questions arose as to whether seeing her face mattered when other types of testimony are permitted. For example, written depositions are sometimes taken when a person is not present and testimony conducted from behind

a screen when a person's life is threatened. The federal court sided with Judge Parnuk's insistence on seeing her face as a requisite for deciding the veracity of her suit.

#### DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

*Hijabis* in America were not a single entity. There was a fluidity in wearing *hijab* among convert and immigrant Muslim women of first and subsequent generations. Those women wore *hijab* or stopped wearing it in relation to changes in their faith; in response to social, work, or legal pressures; as their understanding of *hijab* altered over time; and as a matter of personal preference. Some women expressed that they "grew out of" wearing *hijab*, while there were also Muslim women who "grew into" wearing *hijab* as well.

Many non-Muslims regarded *hijab* wearers as oppressed women; the Muslim women often regarded themselves as liberated and viewed their covering as a feminist act in that wearing *hijab* is a rejection of values that fostered sexual objectification and distorted body image issues among females. One study of African-American Muslim women showed that wearing *hijab* as a fulfillment of their religious duty contributed to the positive body image of the participants. Some Muslim women were by turns amused, angered, or frustrated by the misconceptions that non-Muslims had concerning *hijab*—such as when they were asked whether they had to bathe or sleep in *hijab*. In fact, *hijab* was worn only when a Muslim woman was going to be seen by persons not in her immediate family—in public, at work, or at home in front of guests. In the privacy of her immediate family the Muslim woman would uncover her hair and wear any type of traditional, casual, or formal clothing.

Other Muslim-American women have regarded objections to *hijab* as reminiscent of colonial efforts in earlier centuries to impose Western social values and modes of dress on Muslim societies. They often cited the fact that conservative Jewish groups and Christian groups, including the Apostolic Christian Church and some Pentecostal and Dutch Reformed churches, emphasize modesty in dress and partial or total head covering, yet Muslims are singled out for charges of ignorance, oppression, and antifeminism.

#### CONCLUSION

Particularly after the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Muslim-American women faced increasing pressures and hostility toward their head scarves. They often found themselves to be the lightning rod for anti-Islamic sentiment. Many Muslim women felt forced to choose between *hijab* and other social, legal, or economic concerns. Muslim women who wore *hijab* did so because they believed *hijab* to be a tenet of faith. Expected to assimilate into the larger society, yet sometimes denied access to jobs and institutions that would allow them to do so, *hijabis* became, in



effect, oppressed by the very society that claimed they were oppressed by their religion. American *hijabis* found themselves to be in a curious position indeed.

Tahira Abdul-Jalil

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**Hi Jolly** See HAJJI ALI.

**Hispanic-American Muslims** See LATINA/O MUSLIM AMERICANS.

## hip-hop

Although frequently regarded as a synonym for rap music, hip-hop represents a multifaceted culture consisting of at least four essential elements: emceeing (MCing) or rapping, deejaying (DJing), graffiti painting, and b-boying, also called break-dancing. Since its advent in the mid-1970s, the presence of Muslim hip-hop artists and the prevalence of Islamic language and symbolism in rap music have made hip-hop an important part of Muslim-American history. The influence of Islam on hip-hop culture has been so pronounced that Islam has been called by some the "official religion" of hip-hop.

### ORIGINS

Hip-hop arose as a voice of black urban street culture from the economically depressed neighborhoods of the South Bronx in NEW YORK CITY during the mid-1970s. Shaped by

the experiences of inner-city poverty and deprivation, hip-hop has developed into one of America's foremost iconoclastic cultural movements. Although the precise origins of the expression remain unclear, the term "hip-hop" was popularized by the scat that opens the Sugarhill Gang's 1979 smash hit song "Rapper's Delight." In addition to being a form of music and dance, hip-hop also constitutes a cultural, political, and intellectual phenomenon that encompasses a particular style of dress, vernacular language, and way of living.

As a graphic act of social defiance, graffiti was among the first elements of hip-hop to come to the public's attention. By the early 1970s, youth in New York City were breaking into train yards by night and spray-painting the sides of subway cars with colorful murals that invoked popular cultural imagery. They also produced artistic renderings of the artists' names, a custom known as tagging. The Metropolitan Transit Authority reacted by commissioning guard dogs, barbed-wire fences, and undercover police patrols in an effort to stop the graffiti artists from defacing property.

During the same period, the other elements of hip-hop—emceeing, deejaying, and b-boying—were also beginning to take shape. DJ Kool Herc, widely considered the father of hip-hop music, moved with his family from Jamaica to New York City in 1967. Herc purportedly first made a name for himself in August 1973 by deejaying a back-to-school party in the recreation room at a new apartment complex in the west Bronx. Borrowing a sound system from his father, who was the soundman for a local rhythm-and-blues band, Herc learned to isolate the breaks in music, the instances where all the instruments faded barring the percussion. Herc also learned to sustain these breaks indefinitely by playing the same song on two turntables at once and switching back and forth. This musical innovation was integral to the birth of b-boying, which developed as a competitive, acrobatic style of dance that took place during the break of a song and incorporated an inventive repertoire of moves such as the helicopter, whereby breakers spun on the top of their heads. Herc often proffered spoken interjections during breaks in the Jamaican tradition of toasting, a style of lyrical chanting in which the deejay speaks over the beat of a song. For this reason, toasting is frequently cited as an oratorical precedent for emceeing.

Along with Herc, two other DJs from the Bronx—Grandmaster Flash and Afrika Bambaataa—have been labeled the trinity of hip-hop music. Grandmaster Flash honed turntable techniques into an art form by introducing what he termed the Quick Mix theory, which utilized backspinning and cutting; in this process, the deejay would spin a record in reverse to a previous point in the audio and operate the sound mixer's crossfader quickly to create a patchwork of two records. In the mid-1970s, Afrika Bambaataa formed the Zulu Nation movement, a hip-hop crew that comprised the Zulu King break-dancers and a whole host of emcees.



Many deejays had success hosting block parties in which youth would congregate en masse in neighborhood parks or abandoned buildings; other pioneering members of this movement include Grand Wizard Theodore, Charlie Chase, Baby D, Jazzy Jay, and Red Alert.

The Sugarhill Gang's "Rapper's Delight," the first chart-topping rap song, propelled hip-hop music into the national spotlight on its release in 1979 and was followed by important contributions from hip-hop artists such as Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, Kurtis Blow, and the Cold Crush Brothers. In the mid-1980s, as graffiti spilled over into the streets and b-boying was temporarily supplanted by a series of dance fads such as the Whop, the Reebok, and the Cabbage Patch, the next generation of hip-hop emcees came to prominence.

This new school of hip-hop was led by Run-D.M.C., a Queens trio who fused rap with hard rock and garnered critical attention for their breakthrough 1986 album *Raising Hell*. Run-D.M.C. joined other new school artists such as LL Cool J, Beastie Boys, and Public Enemy in solidifying hip-hop's place in America's cultural consciousness. By the end of the decade, hip-hop witnessed the advent of so-called gangsta rap on the West Coast, as the N.W.A. (Niggaz With Attitude) released their highly charged album *Straight Outta Compton* in 1989. The 1990s saw an even greater explosion of hip-hop artists, and by the turn of the century hip-hop had become America's top-selling musical genre for the first time. Over the course of its history, hip-hop has come to permeate various aspects of American society and culture from radio, television, and advertising to art, design, and clothing.

### THE FIVE PERCENTERS

Islam has been a source of musical and cultural inspiration to many in the hip-hop community, as Muslim sounds, images, and symbolism have left profound marks on hip-hop culture. Rap music in particular has been shaped by the musical contributions of Muslim artists and the pervasiveness of Islamic language in rap lyrics. No tradition has been more influential in hip-hop than the FIVE PERCENTERS, many of whom have become leading hip-hop artists. Moreover, Five Percenter slang and ideology have become essential parts of hip-hop's vernacular to the extent that many emcees not even affiliated with the Five Percenters have habitually adopted their lingo. Five Percenters have been a part of hip-hop culture from its inception, acting as peacekeepers for parties hosted by deejays like Kool Herc in the nascent years of the movement.

In 1963, CLARENCE 13X, a former member of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), founded the Nation of Gods and Earths (NGE) in Harlem, the New York City neighborhood many would refer to as Mecca. The NGE's most important ideas were derived from the 120 Lessons, a series of teachings in question-and-answer format based on the NOI's Supreme

Wisdom lessons. The NGE taught that 85 percent of people were the uncivilized slaves who were blind, deaf, and dumb regarding their own condition; 10 percent were the wealthy, dishonest manipulators of the 85 percent; and 5 percent were the poor, righteous teachers with knowledge of self who were responsible for teaching freedom, justice, and equality to the uncivilized. Members of the NGE believed that they belonged to the civilized 5 percent and, for that reason, were known as Five Percenters.

While there has been a common misconception that Five Percenters view themselves as a Muslim community, the NGE does not claim to offer just a religion but an entire way of life. Five Percenters attach symbolic significance to certain numbers and letters such that initiates who have memorized their lessons can demonstrate the cosmological meaning of certain words and numerical figures. Relying on a decipherment system called the Supreme Alphabet, for example, Five Percenters can break down words such as Allah into "Arm, Leg, Leg, Arm, Head" and Islam into "I Self Lord And Master" to show and prove the Five Percenter doctrine that black men are gods.

Much Five Percenter jargon has been appropriated through common hip-hop expressions, such as "peace" and "dropping science," and instilled with new hip-hop-specific meaning. Other examples include the affirmation "word," which is shorthand for the phrase "word is bond" from the Supreme Wisdom Lessons; to praise something as "the bomb," which originates from verbal battles in which Five Percenters "bombed" one another with memorized lessons; and the popular appellation "G," which did not originally stand for "gangsta" but "god."

Many hip-hop artists have explored Five Percenter themes explicitly in their music. Brand Nubian's 1993 track "Allah and Justice" was a creative reimagining of the NGE anthem "The Enlightener." In 1997, Rakim released the song "The Mystery (Who Is God)," in which he reflected on the divinity of the black man and explicated all numbers in the Supreme Mathematics decipherment system. J-Live entitled his 2008 album *Then What Happened* based on a question posed in the 120 Lessons. In the opening track "One to 31," J-Live creatively narrates the course of his career through a question-and-answer format that is also loosely modeled on the Five Percenter lessons. Many other well-known hip-hop artists, such as WU-TANG CLAN, Busta Rhymes, Big Daddy Kane, Poor Righteous Teachers, World's Famous Supreme Team, and Lakim Shabazz, have also expressed allegiance to the NGE. While artists like Nas and KRS-One have had no formal ties to the NGE, their lyrics have borne the mark of Five Percenter influence.

### THE NATION OF ISLAM

The Nation of Islam, the movement out of which the Five Percenters emerged, has also maintained a significant presence in the hip-hop community. Chuck D and Flavor Flav

of Public Enemy are perhaps the best-known examples of emcees who have allied themselves with the NOI. Both artists have claimed to possess a responsibility as Muslims to set a precedent with their lyrics and model a better way of life for struggling black communities and neighborhoods.

Public Enemy has also paid tribute to NOI leaders such as MALCOLM X (1925–65) and LOUIS FARRAKHAN (1933– ) in their music. Farrakhan, who became the head of a new Nation of Islam in 1978, has publicly recognized the potential of hip-hop as a means of instruction and guidance for Muslim YOUTH, even asserting on one occasion that “one rap song is worth more than a thousand of my speeches.” In 2001, Farrakhan delivered the keynote address at the Hip Hop Summit in New York, organized and sponsored by rap music mogul Russell Simmons. Other notable hip-hop emcees who have been associated with the NOI include Ice Cube, a former member of the gangsta rap group N.W.A.; Snoop Dogg; and DJ Hi-Tek of the hip-hop duo Reflection Eternal.

### SUNNI MUSLIMS

Although the Five Percenters and the NOI have arguably been the most prominent sources of Islam in hip-hop, Sunni Muslims have also contributed significantly to mainstream hip-hop culture. For instance, MOS DEF, a many-time Grammy Award nominee, has been outspoken regarding his Muslim religion and has posited a connection between hip-hop and Qur’anic recitation: Both practices make use of rhyme schemes and other poetic devices to concentrate large amounts of information into short, easily memorized verses, which allow for a more profound understanding of the message and a deeper relationship with the recited material.

Mos Def began his celebrated 1999 album *Black on Both Sides* with the *basmallah*, a Muslim invocation meaning “in the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.” In Lupe Fiasco’s 2005 song “Muhammad Walks,” an innovative remix of Kanye West’s hit single “Jesus Walks,” the artist recites the *basmallah* and samples the *ADHAN*, the Islamic call to prayer. Lupe also references a number of Islamic topics such as Ramadan, the HAJJ, and selected Muslim codes of conduct. The final verse includes a prayer that solicits forgiveness, strength, and blessings and concludes with the ecumenical invocation, “Muhammad talk to me; Jesus walk with me.”

Brother Ali is another example of an artist who has used rap music as a medium for introspection on his identity as a Sunni Muslim emcee. In his 2007 song “Daylight,” Brother Ali rebukes critics who claim to have perceived a conflict between his Islamic beliefs and his decision to use curse words in his rhymes. In response to the criticism, Brother Ali testifies to his belief in the Qur’an and his strong relationship with God, while claiming responsibility for his own repentance if God judges him a sinner. Several other prominent hip-hop artists have also been Sunni Muslims, including Q-Tip and

Ali Shaheed Muhammad from A TRIBE CALLED QUEST; EVERLAST; Freeway; and Jorge “Fabel” Pabon, a founding member of the break-dancing group Rock Steady Crew.

### ISLAM AND MUSIC

In addition to these artists, a subset of Muslim emcees have emerged who aspire to interfuse more fully their rap music with Islamic religious thought and who concern themselves with Islamic traditions pertaining to the permissibility of music. These artists have been distinct from other Muslim-American emcees because they choose to spotlight their religious identity and create music largely intended for a Muslim audience. This form of Muslim rap music has been characterized by practices such as restricting the use of certain instruments, refraining from profanity, and focusing on matters of doctrinal importance.

Many of these artists have conceived of their music as an alternative to mainstream hip-hop, particularly regarding hip-hop’s sometimes contentious emphases on commercialism and misogyny, and their music has appealed to Muslims who crave music consistent with both their mainstream musical tastes and their religious commitments. The issue of the permissibility of music in Islam has been disputed because of a legal ruling that forbids the use of particular musical instruments. On the one hand, many Muslims have regarded all forms of music as *haram*, or prohibited. Those of this opinion have often considered music to be an essentially harmful influence; on the other hand, a number of Muslims have deemed music admissible provided that it serves a benevolent purpose. This latter group has offered alternative interpretations of music that have recourse to both Qur’anic sources and the important historical functions that music has had within the Muslim community.

Muslim hip-hop artists have responded in a variety of ways to the controversy surrounding music in Islam. Maryland-based hip-hop trio NATIVE DEEN use only percussion instruments in their music, a decision that they believe broadens their appeal by attracting Muslims who adhere to Islamic musical restrictions as well as those who listen to all forms of music. Other emcees, such as Miss Undastood, have emphasized the lyrical content of their songs, contending that any ambiguity with regard to music’s permissibility is outweighed by the value of its positive influence in the Muslim community.

Imam Al-Hajj Talib Abdur-Rashid, leader of the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood in New York City, has argued that music ought to be judged on both its form and its content by taking into account an array of Islamic determinations. Also known as the “Hip-Hop Imam,” Abdur-Rashid has defended the permissibility of music by using *hadith*, traditions in which the prophet Muhammad voiced no objection to musical performances. Other supporters have drawn a connection

between Muslim hip-hop and POETRY, which was a powerful expression of faith in pre-Islamic Arabia and often a part of missionary work on behalf of Islam.

In 2004, Los Angeles resident Mike Shapiro created the Web site MuslimHipHop.com after attending a hip-hop performance at a mosque. The features on the Web site include artist profiles and interviews, streaming radio, and literature on the permissibility of music in Islam. Part of the stated mission of MuslimHipHop.com is both to “show Muslims there is a creative outlet for them to express themselves in a *halal* [permissible] way” and to “set the standard and code of conduct for those who partake in Muslim hip-hop.”

Many Muslim-American emcees also aspire to produce music that identifies them simultaneously as Muslim and American to combat STEREOTYPES that misunderstand the Islamic religion as innately dangerous and Muslims as radically foreign. The music of Capital D, for instance, a Chicago-based emcee, betrays a profound interest in American society that has taken the form of criticism of both the IRAQ WAR and what he views as the corrupt culture of corporate America. At the same time, as a Muslim hip-hop artist, Capital D performs only in venues that do not serve alcohol while he is on stage. In fact, Capital D stopped performing for a time shortly after converting to Islam to decide for himself whether or not rap music was consistent with his Islamic beliefs. Muslim hip-hop of this sort has also gained popularity outside of the United States in places such as the United Kingdom, Morocco, South Africa, and Palestine, creating what has been called the transglobal hip-hop *umma*, or community.

James R. Young, Jr.

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### HIV/AIDS

As is true for many people of faith, HIV/AIDS has often been a difficult issue for Muslim Americans to address. When HIV/AIDS emerged as an epidemic in the early 1980s, HIV infection and the AIDS disease were generally associated with gay sex and drug use, both of which have been prohibited in most interpretations of SHARI‘A, or Islamic law and ethics. Despite this, Muslim Americans have had a long history of involvement in HIV/AIDS work, advocating Islamic approaches to the epidemic that have been grounded in compassion and justice.

### RESPONDING TO A CRISIS

On June 5, 1981, the first cases of the disease that would come to be known as AIDS were reported in LOS ANGELES. In the midst of widespread fear and uncertainty, the media adopted the term GRID (Gay-Related Immune Deficiency), portraying AIDS as a gay white male disease. But even in those early years of the epidemic, AIDS did not exclusively affect gay white men, and Muslim Americans, especially AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, were among the first to see that the disease was bound to affect all Americans. In the midst of the silence about how AIDS was affecting other communities, many Muslim Americans took it on themselves to ensure that education, support, and services were available. In 1983, for example, Rashidah Abdul-Khabeer was working as an epidemiology nurse in PHILADELPHIA. The first person with AIDS she met at the medical center was an African-American gay man. For Abdul-Khabeer, this meeting was the starting point for what has been a lifelong commitment to HIV/AIDS work. Recalling that moment at the medical center, Abdul-Khabeer explained, “The radiologist told the patient he had AIDS, then left the room, leaving me to explain ‘AIDS’ to this young man. That’s when I realized: that’s how people are going to deal with AIDS in the black community: give them words, then walk away.” Almost immediately, Abdul-Khabeer began speaking publicly about the disease to heighten awareness among African Americans. In 1985, she founded Blacks Educating Blacks About Sexual Health Issues (BEBASHI), a community-based organization providing health education, case management, and support services.

This concern over the lack of focus on AIDS in African-American communities was shared by many African-American leaders. LOUIS FARRAKHAN, supreme minister of the NATION OF ISLAM, was among the most vocal to speak about the impact of HIV/AIDS in black America. In 1988, Farrakhan blamed the U.S. government for what he called a conspiracy to destroy black people with AIDS. Farrakhan’s views resonated with other theories circulating at the time, namely, that HIV was engineered in government labs and that doctors were giving HIV to black children. Under Farrakhan’s leadership, the Nation of Islam established a clinic for people with AIDS in WASHINGTON, D.C.

While Farrakhan’s views on the origins of AIDS were not widely supported, his approach of combating injustice with action resonated with many Muslim Americans. Naima Saif’ullah, a Muslim woman living in New York, had converted to Islam in 1982 just as the AIDS crisis erupted. A longtime sexually-transmitted-disease outreach worker in NEW YORK CITY, Saif’ullah believed that her work to promote safer sex was even more critical now. She stressed that HIV could be transmitted only through blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk; condoms were a matter of life and death in a time of AIDS. As such, Saif’ullah saw condom distribution in the

midst of the AIDS crisis as her Islamic duty. At a 1991 forum at her mosque in New York, Saif'ullah explained, "Everyone to whom I hand a condom out there in the streets has to be regarded as a potential Muslim. We are not talking about birth control! If you don't take precautions in the midst of an epidemic, you may be guilty of killing another believer. According to the Prophet, the consequence for that is eternal hell!" Saif'ullah traveled to all five New York boroughs, distributing condoms and counseling people on how to protect themselves against HIV.

### WORKING WITHIN THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

As the early efforts of Abdul-Khabeer and Saif'ullah suggest, there was a tremendous need for responding to the AIDS crisis in American society. One challenge they faced was that many of their fellow believers thought that AIDS was not a Muslim problem. Some Muslim Americans moralized about the spread of HIV/AIDS, calling it a curse from God for sinful behavior. Most, however, treated HIV as a problem "out there," irrelevant to those who practiced an Islamic way of life. But those Muslim Americans working in the AIDS crisis believed that these responses had to be challenged. Their fellow believers needed to know how to protect themselves against infection, and believers already living with HIV needed support from their mosques, imams, and community leaders.

Saif'ullah endured many comments that her outreach work was "un-Islamic." But rather than trying to change her fellow believers' minds, she decided to focus on the AIDS risk within her mosque. Her biggest concern was the practice of polygyny. Having been married to a man who had more than one spouse, Saif'ullah knew that polygyny could put everyone in the family at risk if anyone's HIV-status was unknown. In the late 1980s, with her imam's assistance, Saif'ullah helped to organize HIV-testing for prospective marriage partners and distributed HIV pamphlets and flyers. Her imam actively spoke about HIV and polygyny, telling women that in the midst of the AIDS crisis, they had the right to reject plural marriage. With such open discussion of AIDS and the imam's support, HIV support projects at the mosque increased in the early 1990s, including work to ensure that those members who died from AIDS-related causes received proper Muslim burials.

For Tarajee Abdur-Rahim, HIV work in her New York Muslim community was deeply personal. When she and her husband, Malik, were diagnosed with HIV in the mid-1980s, there was no Muslim support system in place. Her search to find support for herself and other HIV-positive believers was long and difficult. While Abdur-Rahim did encounter some sympathetic response when first coping with the shock of her diagnosis, her public calls for Muslims with HIV to be supported as full members of the community were met with resistance and sometimes outright hostility. One imam told her

that "Muslims have the cure for AIDS: no boyfriend, no girlfriend, no AIDS! End of story." Another leader advocated that "they need to put all Muslims with AIDS in leper colonies." When Abdur-Rahim questioned whether the community would support HIV-positive women who wanted to marry, still more believers shunned her. But Abdur-Rahim did not stop questioning fellow believers and area imams. In the early 1990s, Abdur-Rahim started "Jihad Wa Tauheed" (Struggle and unity), a bimonthly newsletter on AIDS, to facilitate the awareness, information, and support she knew was lacking inside the Muslim community. She also coordinated a discussion group for other Muslims with HIV and an array of support services for those who were too sick to shop for groceries or do laundry. While the AIDS stigma did not leave her mosque, Abdur-Rahim's work ensured that fellow HIV-positive Muslims had a supportive community of believers.

### THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

The year 2006 marked the 25th year of the AIDS epidemic. Worldwide, there were an estimated 33.2 million people with HIV, 1.2 million of them in the United States. While some of those with HIV/AIDS were surely Muslim, it remained difficult to determine the full impact of AIDS on the Muslim-American community. AIDS statistics have never been reported for religious groups, and many HIV-positive people have stayed silent about the disease because of its stigma. A 2002 survey conducted by *AZIZAH* magazine offered one of the first national glimpses into the AIDS epidemic among Muslim Americans. Responses came in primarily from California, New York, New Jersey, and Georgia; nearly half of those who responded said they knew a Muslim with HIV.

As the impact of AIDS within the Muslim-American community increased, so, too, did the number of Muslims advocating the need both for compassionate responses to AIDS and for action to end the epidemic. *Azizah's* survey documented that many American imams, including Imam El-Amin in San Francisco and Imam Ibrahim Pasha in Atlanta, supported open discussion of AIDS at their mosques, sometimes during Friday prayers. Community organizations such as the Los Angeles-based Project Islamic HOPE (Helping Oppressed People Everywhere) pressed for discussion and action about AIDS in the Muslim community. And support for Muslims with HIV expanded in prisons, where HIV infection rates were significantly higher than in the general population.

In Philadelphia, Waheedah Shabazz-el, an HIV-positive Muslim activist, has worked on all of these fronts. Diagnosed with HIV in 2004 while she was imprisoned, Shabazz-el wondered how she could profess to be a believing Muslim while living with HIV. Coming to accept her identity as an HIV-positive woman, she devoted herself to HIV/AIDS activism. Shabazz-el began attending health fairs sponsored by area mosques, using this opportunity to spread HIV awareness



among her fellow believers. In 2006, she led a campaign to make condoms available to prisoners in the city's jails. And she regularly traveled across the city to HIV clinics and support groups in search of other Muslims living with HIV. In June 2008, Shabazz-el teamed up with Rashidah Abdul-Khabeer, the epidemiology nurse who had been educating black Americans about AIDS since 1983, to host a forum in which area imams could make a citywide platform on the theme of "Islam: HIV Compassion and Justice." Shabazz-el commented, "Helping another brother or sister out: *that* is what Islam is all about." Such efforts by Shabazz-el, Abdul-Khabeer, and others have helped to mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS in the Muslim-American community.

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### holidays

Muslims in the United States have celebrated a variety of holidays since the colonial era. Some of these have been explicitly religious, while others have been secular. AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES were undoubtedly the first Muslims in North America to mark the major Muslim religious holidays of Eid al-Fitr, the festival celebrating the end of dawn-to-sunset fasting during the month of Ramadan,

and Eid al-Adha, the festival held at the end of the pilgrimage to Mecca. Since then, most observant and many nonobservant Muslim Americans, whatever their ethnic or national background, have celebrated these holidays. Since the 1800s, Muslim Americans have also celebrated national holidays specific to the United States, including Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and sometimes Christmas and Easter. The celebration of Muslim religious holidays and American national holidays has shown that Muslim Americans have embraced both sides of their hyphenated identity. The various ways in which they have marked these holidays have also demonstrated their religious, ethnic, and racial diversity.

### RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

In addition to holidays such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid-al-Adha, Muslim Americans have held festivals or commemorations specific to their particular ethnic or religious group. In the 19th century, for example, African-American Muslim slaves along the GEORGIA SEACOAST participated in the West African festival *saraka* (or perhaps *sadaqa*). The purpose of the festival was to offer thanks, commemorate ancestors, or ask for help. Its name may have derived from the Arabic word *sadaqa*, meaning "almsgiving," especially at the end of Ramadan.

In its American version on Sapelo Island, Georgia, the women in the community made sweet rice cakes to share with children and grandchildren. Rice was soaked in water overnight, then pounded in a mortar to a paste. Honey or sometimes sugar would be added, and flat cakes would be made out of the resulting paste. Sometimes the women would bless the cakes before letting the children eat them, saying "Ameen, Ameen, Ameen," the Arabic word for "amen." Though these women passed on their GULLAH culinary traditions to their progeny, the specifically Muslim meaning of the food and the festival seems to have been lost sometime in the late 19th or early 20th century.

During the 20th century, SHI'Ā MUSLIM AMERICANS began to participate in ASHURA, the commemoration of the death of Husayn, grandson of the prophet Muhammad, at Karbala in 680 C.E. This holiday, often marked by ritual mourning and contemplation, was first observed in the early 20th century, when a significant portion of the ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS who had immigrated from Syria and Lebanon were Shi'a. First celebrated in people's homes, Ashura ceremonies were later held at the Progressive Arabian Hashemite Society, likely after the arrival in 1949 of MOHAMAD JAWAD CHIRRI (1913–64), leader of the Islamic Center of Detroit (which became the Islamic Center of America in 1962).

In the 1950s, Ashura was also commemorated by some Sunni Muslims, including Albanian and Turkish Muslims, who came from cultures that have developed a strong sense of loyalty to the memory of the prophet Muhammad's family. In 1953, a Bektashi Sufi *tekke*, or lodge, was established out-



President George W. Bush celebrates Eid al-Fitr at the White House in 2001. First Lady Hillary Clinton hosted the first such celebration at the White House in 1996. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

side Detroit by Albanian-American Muslims who, though not Shi'a, nevertheless marked both Nowruz, the Persian New Year, and Ashura. By the 1980s, 300 to 500 people attended the *tekke* after Ashura each year. They listened to religious speeches, prayed, and enjoyed a large communal meal.

By the 21st century, some TURKISH-AMERICAN MUSLIMS also observed Ashura by focusing on the story of the biblical and Qur'anic figure of Noah. Participants prepared a special dessert, *ashura*, also known as Noah's Pudding. A sweet pudding that includes mixed nuts and fruits, the dessert, which commemorates Noah's Ark, was shared among friends, family members, and neighbors. In February 2009, for example, the Interfaith Dialog Center (IDC), a northern New Jersey-based Turkish Muslim community, prepared 500 cups of this ancient Turkish dessert. Berna and Ozgur Dogru, who lived in Lyndhurst, brought 100 of these cups to a local Catholic parish to celebrate this festival. Jewish and Christian leaders also joined Muslims at the center to discuss their shared stories of Noah and Moses, both of whom are considered to be prophets in Islamic traditions.

Another holiday observed by a minority of Muslim Americans is *mawlid an-nabi*, the celebration of the birthday of the prophet MUHAMMAD. Rituals surrounding the event are considered to be impermissible innovations to Islam, particularly by some SALAFI MUSLIMS. As a result, groups of Muslim Americans have disagreed over whether to hold the celebrations and how to conduct them. In 1994, for example, an Afghani group of Muslims left the Masjid Nur, or the Mosque of Light, in San Diego after they were refused permission to hold a celebration honoring the birth of the Prophet in the Islamic center.

By far the most popular religious holidays among Muslim Americans from the early 20th century to the 21st century, however, have been Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

#### Eid al-Fitr

During Ramadan, the ninth month of the ISLAMIC CALENDAR, many Muslim Americans abstain from food, drink, and sex from dawn to sunset each day. Children, women who are menstruating, the elderly, and the sick are excused if they

wish to be. A time for contemplation and worship, Ramadan is also traditionally a time of family togetherness. During the breaking of the fast after sundown each evening, called *iftar*, families, friends, and community members sometimes invite one another over or congregate at a mosque. Because of the 11-day difference between the Islamic calendar, which is a lunar calendar, and the Gregorian calendar, which is a solar calendar, Ramadan is observed 11 days earlier each year. Also in the lunar calendar, events do not fall on fixed days, as they do in the solar calendar. Opinions can differ on the calculations of the lunar calendar, depending on whether the moon's location is determined by the naked eye or by astronomical calculations; this, too, can result in beginning of fasting on different days. In 1993, for instance, the two mosques of Los Angeles did not concur on the exact date to begin Ramadan. The Islamic Center of Southern California chose one day, and the Garden Grove Mosque chose the next day. Timing controversy of Ramadan is a debatable issue for Muslims around the globe, including Muslim Americans.

The festival of Eid al-Fitr traditionally lasts three days. After having abstained from food and drink during the daytime throughout Ramadan, Muslims gather with family

members, relatives, and friends to celebrate Eid al-Fitr by feasting together. After the Eid prayer, they begin to greet each other with hugs and handshakes, along with the phrase, "Ramadan Mubarak," or "Ramadan Karim," meaning "have a blessed Ramadan!" and "Ramadan is generous!" Often, Muslim children receive gifts of money and toys.

Though there is little evidence that African-American Muslim slaves celebrated the festival, it is likely that they did so, given its centrality to the forms of Islam they brought with them to America. To be sure, Arab-American Muslim immigrants celebrated the end of Ramadan, sometimes in the midst of challenging conditions—such as the harsh winters of North Dakota. Looking back in the 1930s on the first decade of the 20th century, Mary Juma, a resident of Ross, North Dakota, remembered her community's celebration of Ramadan. "We have a month of fasting after which everyone visits the home of another," she told an interviewer, "and there was a lot of feasting." SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS also celebrated the festival by the 1940s, if not before. Ibrahim Choudry, a Bengali Muslim and manager of New York's British Merchant Sailors Club for Indian Seamen, organized holiday festivals in Harlem in a small prayer room.



Ramadan, the Islamic month during which many Muslims fast from dawn to sunset each day, is a season of religious obligation, family togetherness, and fun. These Muslim women and girls jump rope in double-dutch style in a park in Brooklyn, New York, during this monthlong celebration. (Ricki Rosen/Corbis News)



The NATION OF ISLAM also celebrated a month of fasting, but rather than observe the holiday according to the ISLAMIC CALENDAR, its members did so each year in December. ELIJAH MUHAMMAD explained that he wished to provide a Muslim alternative to the Christian holiday of Christmas, which he saw as overly materialistic. He also noted that in slave times, Christmas was the time of year in which slaves would be provided with liquor, which he said made them dependent, both chemically and psychologically, on their slave masters. The Nation of Islam changed this policy in 1975, when new leader W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008) observed Ramadan according to the Islamic calendar, and invited Muslims of every racial and ethnic background to celebrate the Eid al-Fitr congregational prayers together on October 17, 1975, at McCormick Place, a CHICAGO convention center. LOUIS FARRAKHAN (1933– ), who re-created a version of the Nation of Islam in 1978, followed suit in 1997 when he also observed Eid al-Fitr according to the Islamic calendar.

The fact that different Muslims of different racial, ethnic, and doctrinal backgrounds all celebrate the Eid al-Fitr has long been a symbol of many Muslim Americans' hope for political, social, and cultural unity. In 1964, Mahmoud Youssef Shawarbi, then director of the FEDERATION OF THE ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, issued an Eid al-Fitr message to Muslims in both the United States and Canada. "Unity and harmony between Muslims in America," he wrote, depended on Muslim Americans' active outreach to one another. Muslims Americans, he continued, must "acquaint ourselves with each other's problems, aspirations, and hopes." By the late 20th and early 21st centuries, an increasing number of Muslim Americans sought to come together to celebrate Eid al-Fitr and to invite non-Muslims to their celebrations.

### Eid al-Adha

Eid al-Adha means literally "Festival of the Sacrifice," the festival that takes place on the 10th day of the Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijjah at the end of the annual PILGRIMAGE to Mecca. Generally, this festival begins with a congregational prayer in the morning and the celebration includes visits from extended family and friends that culminate in sacrificing an animal—often a lamb or goat—to commemorate God's sparing of Ishmael (whom God had initially instructed Abraham to sacrifice, according to Islamic traditions). Some Muslims then give the meat to family, friends, or the poor. Muslim-American organizations have also raised money to have animals slaughtered so that the meat can be donated to local food banks.

Because little research has been conducted on the celebration of Eid al-Adha among early Muslims, it is unclear exactly when and how the festival was observed until quite recently. By the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, Muslim Americans who lived in urban and suburban areas often came together in convention halls and other large sites's

to pray together on the day and sometimes to eat communal meals. In 2000, for example, the MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY held an Eid al-Adha celebration that offered FOOD, entertainment, and fellowship to people of all faiths in Williams Park, Florida. In 2004, five mosques in Harlem united for the Eid al-Adha prayer in Riverbank State Park.

### Public Recognition of the Two Eids

In the latter 20th century, an increasing number of Sunni and Shi'a Muslim Americans of various ethnic and racial backgrounds began to seek public recognition from non-Muslims for both Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. While various municipalities and states recognized Eid through issuing proclamations, not until 1990 did these holidays receive recognition from the White House. That year, President George H. W. Bush, in a diplomatic overture to the many Muslim nations who supported the U.S.-led war to remove Iraq's army from Kuwait, extended his best wishes to Muslims across the world.

In 1996, First Lady Hillary Clinton, prompted by the AMERICAN MUSLIM COUNCIL, invited approximately 100 Muslims from around the country to celebrate Eid al-Fitr at the White House. In 2000, President Bill Clinton hosted the celebration, and President George W. Bush continued the tradition during his administration in the early 21st century. On November 13, 2000, the U.S. Post Office, as part of its Holiday Celebrations Series, introduced a blue-and-gold Eid stamp that featured Islamic CALLIGRAPHY produced by Muslim-American Mohamed Zakariya. Muslim Americans hailed what they believed was recognition of their status as Americans.

Some municipalities have also attempted to mark the holidays. On September 22, 1992, New York City mayor David N. Dinkins endorsed a proposal to include the two Muslim holidays among the religious holidays for which the city suspends parking rules. In 2007, the New Jersey school district of Cliffside Park joined other school districts in Paterson, Prospect Park, and Atlantic City to recognize the two major holidays. For the most part, however, local governments, businesses, and schools have not yet publicly recognized these holidays. Many Muslim-American employees have reported troubles convincing some employers to give them a day off for each of their two major holidays, just as some public school children have had difficulty obtaining excused absences for the two days.

### NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Muslim Americans have not only sought recognition of their religious holidays. They have also joined with non-Muslim Americans to celebrate American national holidays. One of the first prominent and public Independence Day celebrations in which Muslim Americans participated was held at the COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893 in Chicago. The Chicago World's Fair, as it is also known, featured elaborate July 4th



celebrations on the fairgrounds. On the Midway Plaisance, the section of the fairgrounds featuring displays of non-Anglo cultures and peoples, more than 25,000 attended the July 4th celebration that featured famous speakers and marching bands.

The prayer offered at the start of the festivities was not given by a Christian minister but by an imam (or cleric), Jamal Effendi, who was part of the tableau vivant at the St. Sophia mosque that had been constructed in the "Cairo Street" section of the fair. Dressed in a blue and gold robe, Effendi faced toward Mecca with hands outstretched and palms up, asking God's blessings on the United States. Muslims punctuated his comments either by saying "Amen" or perhaps "Allahu Akbar," or "God is great!" According to the *Chicago Tribune*, they cheered like American-born patriots as the colors (the U.S. flag) were presented.

Since then, many Muslim Americans have been a regular part of July 4th celebrations. During periods in which patriotism has been especially strong, as during WORLD WAR I or after SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Muslim Americans, like other Americans, have been particularly keen to attend public festivities. At the same time, since Islam emerged as a religious tradition among African Americans that offered protest against white supremacy and U.S. FOREIGN RELATIONS with African and Asian countries, there have been periods in which members of the Nation of Islam and other protest groups have eschewed any connection to Independence Day. Noting the role of slavery in U.S. history and his alienation from the story of America's founding, Nation of Islam leader MALCOLM X (1925–65) once famously quipped, "We didn't land on Plymouth Rock; Plymouth Rock landed on us."

Though such protest continued through the era of the VIETNAM WAR in the 1960s and early 1970s, and to a certain extent in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, an overwhelming majority of Muslim Americans have expressed pride in their American identities. After African-American Muslim leader W. D. Mohammed assumed the leadership of the Nation of Islam in 1975, he instituted an annual patriotism celebration, and from the 1970s until his death in 2008, he consistently stressed how all Muslim Americans should celebrate their country on July 4—and the Muslim contribution that helped to build it. A 2007 Pew poll found Muslims largely satisfied with their lives in the United States, and though disagreeing with U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East, they seized Independence Day as a symbol of their loyalty to the nation and the simultaneous desire to change some its policies.

Another national holiday embraced by Muslim Americans is Thanksgiving, a harvest festival celebrated since the colonial era at different times and sometimes for different reasons. In 1941, Congress passed a law mandating that the federal government observe Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of each November. Though Muslim Americans likely celebrated the holiday before then, there is

little evidence detailing such participation. Sometime during the middle 20th century, most Muslim Americans took the day off and prepared a meal for families and friends. In some cases, the cuisine reflected a regional flair: African-American Muslims might serve macaroni and cheese, greens, cornbread, and other Southern foods with a turkey. In the case of Arab-American Muslims in the DETROIT area, turkey, dressing, and Jello salad might be served alongside chickpea dip, Middle Eastern-style rice, and tabouli, or parsley salad.

Finally, since Christmas and Easter are clearly Christian in origin, some Muslim Americans have attempted to keep all vestiges of these traditions from their households—for a variety of reasons. Other Muslim Americans, who emphasize the secular side of these national holidays, celebrate Easter by hiding eggs or giving candy to their children and mark the Yuletide season by trimming a Christmas tree and welcoming Christmas Eve visits from Santa Claus.

## CONCLUSION

The choice to observe various holidays in the United States, whether religious or secular, has been a larger symbol of Muslim-American identity. For example, some religious holidays such as Ashura are particularly important to Shi'a Muslim Americans, while certain rituals associated with holidays such as *mawlid an-nabi*, the Prophet's birthday, are contested by various Muslims along doctrinal lines. Deciding whether to observe July 4 can express a Muslim American's political viewpoints, and determining what to serve on Thanksgiving can demonstrate the blending of various culinary traditions. In all these cases, holidays have been important private and public markers of what it means to be Muslim and American.

*Ismail Acar and Edward E. Curtis IV*

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## Bill Clinton Hosts Eid al-Fitr at the White House (2000)

*On February 20, 1996, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton hosted the first dinner celebrating the end of Ramadan, the Islamic month of dawn-to-sunset fasting, at the White House. Sponsored by the American Muslim Council, a Muslim-American public affairs group, the celebration of this major holiday by the Clinton administration was, for many Muslim Americans, a sign that they had been accepted as a part of the American social fabric. The First Lady continued to host Eid al-Fitr, the "festival of the breaking of the fast," on an annual basis until 2000, when she declined to participate in*

*the event as she was preparing her political campaign for the U.S. Senate. When Muslim-American leaders complained, President Bill Clinton stepped in and became the first president to recognize the holiday at the White House. President George W. Bush then continued the tradition during his first year in office, hosting an Eid dinner on November 19, 2001. The remarks of President Clinton, some of which are excerpted below, were delivered on the morning of January 10, 2000. Clinton praised the teachings of Islamic religion, hailed the contributions of Muslim Americans to American society, and spoke of U.S. efforts to bring peace to the Middle East.*



Eid Mubarak [Blessed Eid!], and welcome to the White House. . . . Over the weekend, along with Muslims all over the world, you celebrated the end of the holy month of Ramadan. The month of daily fasting is not only a sacred duty, it is also a powerful teaching, and in many ways a gift of Islam to the entire rest of the world—reminding not simply Muslims, but all people, of our shared obligation to aid those who live with poverty and suffering. It reminds us that we must work together to build a more humane world.

I must say, it was, I thought, especially fitting that we celebrated the Eid at the end of the first round of the [peace] talks between the Syrians and the Israelis. And I thought it was particularly moving that Imam [Yahya Hendi] read the passage from the Qur'an that said that Allah created nations and tribes that we might know one another, not that we might despise one another. . . . There's a wonderful passage in the Hebrew Torah which warns people never to turn aside the stranger, for it is like turning aside the most high God. And the Christian Bible says that people should love their neighbor as themselves. But it's quite wonderful to say that Allah created the nations and tribes that they might know one another better, recognizing people have to organize their thoughts and categorize their ideas, but that does not mean we should be divided one from another.

It has been a great blessing for me, being involved in these talks these last few days, to see the impact of the month of Ramadan and the Eid on the believers in the Syrian delegation who are here. It was quite a moving thing. And I hope that your prayers will stay with them.

Let me say, also, that there is much that the world can learn from Islam. It is now practiced by one of every four people on Earth. Americans are learning more in our schools and universi-

ties. Indeed, I remember that our daughter took a course on Islamic history in high school and read large portions of the Qur'an, and came home at night and educated her parents about it, and later asked us questions about it. And, of course, there are now 6 million Muslims in our nation today. The number of mosques and Islamic centers, now at 1,200, continues to grow very rapidly.

Today, Muslim Americans are a cornerstone of our American community. They enrich our political and cultural life, they provide leadership in every field of human endeavor, from business to medicine, to scholarship. And I think it is important that the American people are beginning to learn that Muslims trace their roots to all parts of the globe—not just to the Middle East, but also to Africa, and to Asia, and to the Balkans and other parts of Europe. You share with all Americans common aspirations for a better future, for greater opportunities for children, for the importance of work and family and freedom to worship.

But like other groups past and present in America, Muslim Americans also have faced from time to time—and continue to face, sadly, from time to time—discrimination, intolerance and, on occasion, even violence. There are still too many Americans who know too little about Islam. Too often stereotypes fill the vacuum ignorance creates. That kind of bigotry is wrong, has no place in American society. There is no place for intolerance against people of any faith—against Muslims or Jews or Christians, or Buddhists or Bahai—or any other religious group, or ethnic or racial group.

If America wishes to be a force for peace and reconciliation across religious and ethnic divides from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to the Balkans, to Africa, to Asia—if that is what we wish—if we wish to do good around the world, we must first be good here at home on these issues.

I ask all of you to help with that, to share the wellsprings of your faith with those who are different, to help people understand the values and the humanity that we share in common, and the texture and fabric and core of the beliefs and practices of Islam.



Source: "Remarks by President William Clinton at Event Commemorating End of Ramadan," Presidential Hall, the White House, January 10, 2000. Available online. URL: <http://www.amaana.org/ISWEB/ramadan.htm>. Accessed February 18, 2009.

**Hope, Lynn** (1926– ) *saxophonist*

Lynn Hope was born on September 26, 1926, in Birmingham, Alabama. After completing high school, Hope played for trumpeter King Kolax in the early 1940s. The King Kolax band gave Hope the opportunity to expand his tenor saxophone skills around future saxophone stars Joe Houston and John Coltrane. In 1950, Premium Records offered Hope a solo recording contract. Hope recorded “Song of the Wanderer” and “Tenderly,” which reached number eight on the R & B charts and number 19 on the pop charts. It was his one hit. In April 1952, Hope was also featured with musicians Dinah Washington, Louis Jordan, and Lionel Hampton on a Mutual Radio program hosted by Ed Sullivan and broadcast live from Carnegie Hall.

That same year, Lynn Hope, like several other jazz musicians at the time, converted to Islam and began wearing a turban at all of his performances. Late in 1952, he left to perform

the HAJJ, or pilgrimage to Mecca. He adopted a new name, Al Hajj (the Pilgrim) Abdullah Rasheed Ahmad as a symbol of his Islamic identity, but retained Lynn Hope as his stage name. In February 1957, Hope toured the Middle East, bringing his music to new fans in Egypt. In 1960 Hope made his last known recordings for a record label and then, without explanation, largely disappeared from public life.

*Ashley Schwarz*

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**Husayniya** See *IMAMBARGAH*.

**Ibn Said, Omar** See SAID, OMAR IBN.

**Ibrahima, Abdul Rahman** (ca. 1762–1829)

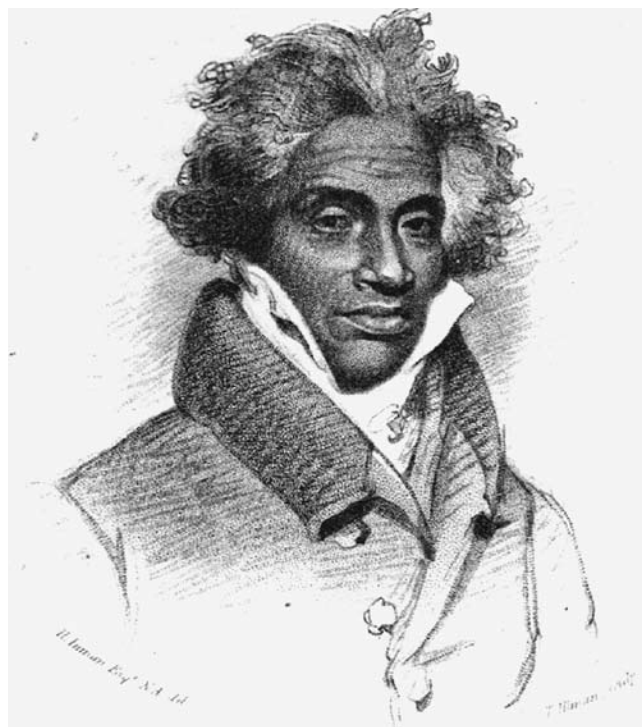
*West African Muslim leader enslaved in the United States*

A Muslim noble and military leader from Futa Jalon, the mountainous region located in the modern West African country of Guinea, Abdul Rahman Ibrahima was one of several highly educated slaves who practiced Islam in the antebellum United States. In the 1820s, Ibrahima gained fame as a Muslim “prince” and received his freedom through the intervention of prominent American philanthropists and the U.S. secretary of state. In 1828, he undertook a tour of the United States to raise the necessary funds to free his American-born family and return with them to his native Africa.

Born in Futa Jalon around 1762, Abdul Rahman Ibrahima was a Fulbe, or Fulani, an ethnic group closely associating with the growth of Islam in West Africa. In Ibrahima’s native land of Futa Jalon, the Fulbe had built a powerful state through military conquest, participation in the slave trade, and successful cultivation of the fertile region around the headwaters of the Senegal and Gambia Rivers. Like other Fulbe, Futa Jalon’s political and economic leaders also sponsored institutions of Islamic religious life and learning in Timbo, the capital city where Ibrahima lived.

Ibrahima claimed to be the son of an *almamy*, or the Muslim head of state, and whether the story is completely accurate or not, it is clear that when he was enslaved in his 20s, he was a member of the elite class of Futa Jalon. Ibrahima benefited from an extensive Islamic education in Timbuktu and Jenne, two of the great centers of learning in West Africa. He learned to speak several West African languages and could also read and write ARABIC.

After completing his education, the “student prince” became a warrior and served as a military leader around the same time that the ruling Muslim class consolidated its power over the region. On his way home in 1788 from a successful campaign that extended the boundaries of his principality to the Atlantic Ocean, Ibrahima was captured by a West African war party, sent north to the Gambia River, and



Abdul Rahman Ibrahima was a West African noble who spent almost three decades in slavery in Mississippi. His literacy and tragic story caught the attention of abolitionists, African colonization advocates, and newspaper editors who convinced the administration of President John Quincy Adams to offer Ibrahima free transportation back to Africa. Before returning to Africa in 1829, Ibrahima toured the United States to raise money to free his children. (Courtesy of the Author)

sold to European slave traders. Captain John Nevin piloted the slave ship *Africa* that brought Ibrahima to the Americas.

Like many other first-generation Africans who came to the United States, Ibrahima first landed in the West Indies. He then traveled to New Orleans, which was a Spanish possession at the time, and, finally, to Natchez, Mississippi. Using a translator, Ibrahima explained that he was a person of high status in West Africa. His purchaser nicknamed him “Prince,” an appellation that he would carry for the rest of his life.



Like so many other slaves, Ibrahim hated life in the fields, and so he ran away. But after a few weeks wandering in the Mississippi wilderness, he returned to Natchez. In the 1790s, Ibrahim married Isabella, an enslaved African-American Baptist, and they had at least eight children together. He took care of his owner's livestock, kept his own garden, and sold his own produce at the town marketplace.

In 1807, as Ibrahim was selling vegetables in Natchez, John Coates Cox, a white man who had known Ibrahim's father from West Africa, recognized Ibrahim. Cox, who served more than two decades earlier as a ship's surgeon, had been hunting in West Africa when he lost track of his ship's landing party. Though there is no way to confirm Cox's claims, he maintained that Ibrahim's father took him in, cared for him when he was sick, and provided guides to take him back to the seacoast. Cox felt a kinship with Ibrahim and immediately set to work trying to free him. But his appeals to the Mississippi governor and his attempts to purchase Ibrahim's freedom were unsuccessful. Though Cox died before he could see Ibrahim free, his efforts to publicize Ibrahim's case brought the prince to the public's attention.

For the next two decades, Ibrahim continued to labor as a slave and care for his family in Mississippi. In 1826, he wrote a letter in Arabic to the leader of Morocco. Claiming that he was a Moor, or Moroccan, wrongly held captive in the United States, he requested to be freed. This letter made its way from one of Mississippi's U.S. senators to the U.S. consul in Tangier, Morocco, and then to the U.S. Department of State. Secretary of State Henry Clay received letters of support on Ibrahim's behalf not only from local admirers of the prince in Mississippi but also from a U.S. diplomat in Tangier who wished to forge stronger ties with the government of Morocco.

With the support of President John Quincy Adams, Secretary Clay personally intervened in the case of Ibrahim and, on behalf of the federal government, offered him transportation back to Africa on the condition that his owner would set him free. Ibrahim's owner agreed, but Ibrahim refused to leave the United States without freeing his family. Local citizens of Mississippi helped to raise the \$200 necessary to free his wife, but Ibrahim required far more generous patrons to raise the huge sum of more than \$3,000 needed to free his eight children.

Ibrahim was single-minded in achieving that goal. In April 1828, he set out on a 10-month nationwide tour to raise the money he needed to free his children. Ibrahim spoke in major cities, including WASHINGTON, D.C., BALTIMORE, NEW YORK CITY, and PHILADELPHIA. When he reached BOSTON, African-American members of the Black Masons, a fraternal organization, arranged a banquet for him in the African Masonic Hall and staged a street parade in his

honor in which hundreds of black Bostonians participated. When necessary, Ibrahim willingly donned a Muslim costume to mark himself as exotic and different from other African Americans. In upstate New York, for example, the American Colonization Society invited its members to see "Prince Abdraman, of Timboo . . . in Moorish costume, at the Panorama of the Falls of Niagara." This attempt to use an "Oriental" identity to his own advantage was based on the sound assumption that many whites would see him, as Henry Clay did, not as a black African, but as a member of a different race, the "Moorish race," a people of mixed heritage from North Africa.

Impressed by his mission, prominent merchants, politicians, and philanthropists opened their homes, assembly halls, and pocketbooks to Ibrahim. As he traveled along the eastern seaboard, he met Francis Scott Key, the composer of the "Star-Spangled Banner"; Charles and Arthur Tappan, wealthy Christian reformers who would eventually contribute large sums of money to the movement to abolish slavery; Edward Everett, a Massachusetts representative in the U.S. Congress; and Thomas Gallaudet, the founder of America's first major school for the deaf.

A shrewd and knowledgeable fund-raiser, Ibrahim tailored his message to each group. When speaking with merchants, he promised to further their economic interests; when conversing with members of the American Colonization Society, which wanted to send African Americans "back to Africa," he endorsed their plans; and when meeting with missionaries, he pledged to spread Christianity in West Africa. But it was clear that these were temporary strategies fabricated by Ibrahim to achieve a larger and more personal objective. When some of his hosts asked him to write the Lord's Prayer in Arabic, he indeed wrote something in Arabic, but it was the *Fatiha*, the opening chapter of the Qur'an used by Muslims as part of their daily prayers and other devotions.

Familiar with both Christian theology and scriptures, Ibrahim was also a critic of white American Christian hypocrisy. According to Cyrus Griffin of the *Natchez Southern Galaxy*, Ibrahim once said that the New "Testament [was] very good law; [but] you no follow it." Further criticizing Americans' lack of piety, he observed: "You no pray often enough." While unpopular among some of his patrons, these sentiments would have been welcomed by his abolitionist benefactors, who believed that slavery was a stain on the soul of America.

Ibrahim claimed that Christians used their religion to justify their greed and cruel use of slaves: "You greedy after money. You good man, you join the religion? See, you want more land, more niggers; you make nigger work hard, make more cotton. Where you find that in your law?" Ibrahim knew what his audiences wanted to hear, and as a result, he

met his fund-raising goal, collecting the enormous sum of \$3,400 during his tour.

In February 1829, 60-something-year-old Abdul Rahman Ibrahima and his wife, Isabella, departed from the port at Norfolk, Virginia, on the *Harriet* for Liberia, the recently founded African-American colony in West Africa. More than four decades had passed since he had been forced to leave his native land. Ibrahima's plan was to wait for the rainy season to finish, and then to make the journey from Liberia to Timbo. But after arriving safely in Monrovia, the colony's capital, he fell ill with fever and diarrhea, and in early July 1829, Ibrahima died.

In 1830, the committee of supporters who had helped Ibrahima stage his fund-raising tour fulfilled Ibrahima's promise by purchasing the freedom of at least four of his sons. In the summer of that year, the committee arranged for the transport of two of them, Simon and Levi, to Africa. They arrived in Monrovia that December, where they rejoined their mother.

Sons Prince and Abraham, while freed, remained in the United States, while at least three of his children remained enslaved. Generation after generation of Ibrahima's descendants—hundreds, if not thousands of Americans—came to trace their lineage to this important if underexplored figure of U.S. history. One of the few AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES whose life is chronicled in both Arabic and English sources, Ibrahima was a remarkably intelligent and courageous human being who doggedly pursued his goal of returning to Africa. In so doing, Ibrahima met some of the most prominent American citizens of his day and convinced them to support his cause. Like other Muslim slaves, he used his identity as a Muslim to advantage. His Arabic literacy impressed American politicians, social reformers, and philanthropists. His Moorish costume set him apart from other slaves. Because of these differences, he was able to accomplish his dream of returning home, a dream unfulfilled for all but a few Africans enslaved in the Americas.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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### Abdul Rahman Ibrahima and Henry Clay (1828)

*Abdul Rahman Ibrahima (ca. 1762–1829), the enslaved son of a West African leader brought to the United States in the late 18th century, had powerful friends in Washington, D.C. In 1828, he met both Secretary of State Henry Clay and President John Quincy Adams. Ibrahima had come to the attention of Clay, a slave owner who supported the idea of sending free blacks to Africa, in the early 1820s, through the dogged efforts of a Mississippi journalist, Andrew Marschalk. In his newspaper stories, Marschalk publicized the tragic case of Ibrahima, a highly educated Moorish, or African Muslim, prince. Marschalk encouraged officials in Washington to secure Ibrahima's manumission from his owner, Thomas Foster, and repatriate him to Africa. After discussing the matter with the U.S. ambassador in Morocco, Secretary of State Clay agreed to help. The two letters below reflect that good news. The first, from Secretary Clay to Andrew Marschalk, offers to pay \$200 for Ibrahima's release and transport back to Africa. The second letter, from Ibrahima to his children in Mississippi, describes his meeting with Secretary Clay and President Adams.*



Washington, 12th Jan. 1828.

Andrew Marschalk, Esq. Natchez:

Sir,—Your letters, both of the 13th ultimo, and the 20th of August last, have been received. The President is obliged by your attention, to the subject of the Moorish Slave, now in the possession of Mr. Thomas Foster. The object of the President, being to restore Prince, the slave mentioned to his family and country, for the purpose of making favorable impressions, in behalf of the United States, there is no difficulty in acceding to the conditions prescribed by Mr. Foster, which I understand to be, that Prince shall not be permitted to enjoy his liberty in this country, but be sent to his own, free from expense to Mr. Foster, who is pleased to ask nothing for the manumission of Prince on those conditions.

I have, therefore, to request that you will complete the humane agency, which you have so kindly undertaken, by calling upon Mr. Foster, assuring him that the above conditions shall be complied with, and receiving the custody of Prince from him. You will then be pleased to send Prince to this city, either by the River or by the sea, as you may determine to be most convenient, for the purpose of his being transported to his native country. In order to defray the expenses of decently, but plainly clothing him, if it should be necessary, and those incident to his voyage and journey to this place, you are authorized to draw upon me,

at sight, for a sum not exceeding two hundred dollars, and I have to request, that you will have the goodness to render an account of the disbursements you may make under this authority.

I am, with great respect, your obedient serv't.  
H[enry]. Clay.

\* \* \*

Washington, May 10, 1828

My dear children,

I proceeded to this place to see the President and Mr. Clay; they both received me very kindly, and I expect from their expressions to me, that they will pay every attention to my business. In Baltimore the gentlemen took me in a carriage around the town, and showed me all the beauties thereof. In Washington, I visited the President's house, but I found the President the best piece of furniture in the house.

My reception by Mr. Clay was very flattering to me; he invited me to partake of the hospitalities of his house, which I declined, telling him of my good treatment at Williamson's hotel.

Abdul Rahman Ibrahima



Source: *Louisiana Advertiser* (New Orleans), 28 October 1828, 3; *Natchez Statesman and Gazette*, 23 October 1828; Andrew Marschalk, Handbill, 1828.

### **Ijaz, Mansoor** (1961– ) *financier and media commentator*

Mansoor Ijaz, a Pakistani-American Muslim, has been a prominent financier with financial interests in various security technologies and in energy development. He has also appeared extensively in the media as a commentator, especially on the financial markets, terrorism, Pakistan, and Sudan. He has written editorials for major newspapers and magazines such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Weekly Standard*, and *International Herald Tribune*, advocating that the United States reach out to Muslims while maintaining a robust counterterrorism policy. His wealth and media presence have made him a prominent figure in the SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM community.

Mansoor Ijaz was born in August 1961, in Tallahassee, Florida, and raised in rural Virginia as a member of an upper-class Pakistani-American family, the son of Princess Lubna Razia bin Nazir Ijaz and Mujaddid Ahmet Ijaz (1937–92), a nuclear physicist at Virginia Polytechnic University. As a child, Mansoor Ijaz experienced prejudice because

of his Pakistani heritage, but he had a clear model for academic success in his father's achievements. He received a B.A. in nuclear physics from the University of Virginia in 1983. In 1985, he completed a joint master's degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard Medical School in neuromechanical engineering.

In the late 1980s, Ijaz used his expertise in mathematical modeling to create CARAT, a currency, interest rate, and equity risk-management system. In 1990, he founded Crescent Investment Management, a New York investment partnership between himself, retired Lt. Gen. James Alan Abrahamson, former director of Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, and Turkey's Global Group. Crescent Investment Management and its affiliates, Crescent Equity Partners and Crescent Investment Group, have had partners in the Middle East, Asia, and Europe, and have advised several members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Ijaz began to express himself publicly on international affairs in the early 1990s when Pakistani leader Benazir Bhutto was attempting to improve Pakistan's relations with the United States. Ijaz wrote a series of editorials for the *Wall Street Journal* denouncing Bhutto's administration as corrupt and self-destructive. A major contributor to the Democratic Party during the 1990s, Ijaz described himself in 2000 as an unofficial mediator between India and Pakistan and the United States over the disputed territory of Kashmir. However, both the Clinton administration and the government of Pakistan officially denied this claim. In 1996 and 1998, Ijaz served as a "back channel" between the United States and Sudan, against whom President Clinton had imposed a trade embargo for supporting terrorism. Ijaz believed that the Sudanese government would expel or extradite Osama bin Laden and other terrorists in exchange for an end to the sanctions. Sudan did expel bin Laden, who went to Afghanistan. After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Ijaz wrote a number of editorials accusing the Clinton administration of having missed an opportunity to capture bin Laden.

Since 9/11, Ijaz has called on his fellow Muslim Americans to dispel suspicion of Muslims by being "Americans first" and refusing to listen to the extremists in their own community. At the same time, he has denounced incidents such as the expulsion of Yusuf Islam (Cat Stevens) by the United States as a suspected supporter of terrorism in 2004. In both situations, Ijaz positioned himself as the voice of moderation.

Ijaz has been a Trustee of the University of Virginia and an Advisory Board Member for the Rebuild Afghanistan Commission. He has been a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a prestigious nonpartisan think tank that serves as a resource for students, scholars, and government officials on international politics. As a prominent media commentator, businessman, and international negotiator, Ijaz served as a Muslim voice in American corridors of power.

*Sonja Spear with Ashley Schwartz*

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***imambargah***

An *imambargah* is a place in which Shi'a Muslims gather to commemorate and observe rituals associated with the death and martyrdom of their hereditary leaders, or imams. Also referred to as *husayniyas* in parts of Iran, Lebanon, and Iraq; *'ashurkhanas* in Hyderabad, India; *tekkiyas* or *tekkiya-khanas* in western Iran, Afghanistan, and parts of Central Asia; *ma'tam* in Bahrain, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, the word *imambargah* is derived from the Urdu language and literally means "enclosure of the Imams." *Imambargahs* are most prevalent among Ithna 'Asharis, or Twelvers, the largest of the Shi'a Muslim communities. Early SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICANS, who came from Syria and Lebanon in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, often referred to these gathering places as *husayniyas*.

Distinct and yet coexisting with the mosque, the term *imambargah* or *husayniya* can also be a name applied to a separate building or part of a larger complex that might include a place for daily prayers (a *masjid*), an Islamic school, and space for socializing. In smaller or less established communities, however, it can also refer to informal spaces rented for the occasion. While it is difficult to estimate how many such buildings there are in the United States, studies suggest that there are close to 200 Shi'a Twelver MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS spread in both larger urban centers and smaller towns. Cities where there are sizable Shi'a Muslim populations include NEW YORK CITY, LOS ANGELES, Washington, D.C., and DETROIT. Many include an *imambargah* or site designated for significant events in the Shi'a Muslim calendar including HOLIDAYS surrounding the first 10 days of the Muslim month of Muharram and its culmination on the day of ASHURA.

While informal spaces were used for the religious gatherings of Twelver Muslims since the late 19th century in the United States, the first *imambargah* designed and dedicated for this purpose was opened in 1963 in Detroit, Michigan, the

metropolitan center with the largest Shi'a Muslim-American population. The Islamic Center of America, as it was known, catered primarily to settlers from modern Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Israel, and Palestine. Many found employment with the Ford Motor Company, but not until several decades later did a substantial community of a permanent nature begin to emerge and with it the first Shi'a Islamic centers and *imambargahs*.

The *imambargah* does not have a fixed architectural form, and precedent or cultural considerations usually determine its design, how it is "decorated," and what language is used for its events, which in the United States usually includes Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, and English. As a result, differences emerge among the nation's Iraqi, Iranian, Afghan, East and West African, Lebanese, Indian, Pakistani, Bahraini, Saudi, and Azeri Shi'a Muslims. For example, some Muslims of South Asian origin have *tabuts*, or models of the tomb of the Shi'a imam Husayn within them, while Iranian Muslims often prominently display *'alams*, or standards, associated with the Shi'a imam and his family. Lebanese Muslims have neither. The confluence of cultures and the sharing of such places in the United States have also made the Shi'a Muslim-American community aware of their differences, inspiring them to engage in debates about the cultural versus the religious elements of their faith.

Rizwan Mawani

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**imams** See CHAPLAINS; MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS.

**immigration** See DEMOGRAPHICS; IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965.

**Immigration Act of 1965**

The Immigration Act of 1965 (entitled in full the Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of October 3, 1965; also known as the Hart-Celler Act, after its sponsors Senator Philip Hart [D-Mich.] and Representative Emanuel Celler [D-N.Y.]) marked a turning point in the history of Muslims in the United States. By easing restrictions on immigration from Asia and Africa, it facilitated the rapid growth of Muslim communities in America. The ethnic diversity of Muslim Americans increased, and generational, class, and





After the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, more than a million Muslim immigrants arrived in the United States by 2000. Most of them have sought to become citizens of the United States. (Jeff Greenberg/PhotoEdit)

ethnic differences spurred debates about what it meant to be Muslim and American, particularly among recent immigrants, converts to Islam, and descendants of earlier generations of immigrants. The arrival of more Muslims in the country after 1965 has fostered significant contributions to U.S. society in areas that range from **POLITICS**, banking, and business to scholarship, sports, and the arts.

#### **IMMIGRATION POLICY AND THE LIFTING OF NATIONAL QUOTAS**

Between the mid-1920s and 1965, immigration to the United States from the Eastern Hemisphere slowed to a trickle due to quotas set by the National Origins Act of 1924. This legislation capped total immigration from non-European nations—including every nation with a Muslim majority—at no more than 4 percent of all immigrants permitted to enter the United States each year.

The 1965 Immigration Act did away with quotas that discriminated against particular nationalities. It allowed 20,000 immigrants per nation in the Eastern Hemisphere, up to a total of 170,000 annually. A total of 120,000 immigrants

from the Western Hemisphere were permitted each year. No numerical limits were placed on visas for the spouses, children, and parents of U.S. citizens. While the new legislation put highest priority on reuniting families, it also favored the immigration of trained professionals, skilled scientists and artists, and laborers who could fill gaps in the U.S. workforce.

The act's provisions took effect in 1968. A 1978 amendment replaced the Eastern and Western totals with a single worldwide total. Two years later, clauses pertaining to refugees were expanded into separate legislation—the Refugee Act of 1980—to ease entry for individuals fleeing humanitarian crises. The 1965 Immigration Act, in combination with its amendments and the 1980 Refugee Act, altered the profile of immigration during the final decades of the 20th century and continuing into the 21st.

#### **MUSLIMS' ETHNICITIES AND ISLAMIC IDENTITIES**

Although exact statistics regarding immigrants' religious affiliation do not exist, data on national origins and ethnic identities indicate that immigration of Muslims to the

United States increased significantly beginning in the late 1960s. According to estimates by political scientist Mohamed Nimer, fewer than 80,000 Muslims immigrated to the United States in the 145 years before 1965. In the three decades following passage of the 1965 legislation, the total number of Muslim immigrants rose to well over 1 million.

A 2001 poll conducted by Project MAPS (Muslims in the American Public Square) identified two-thirds of American Muslims as first-generation immigrants. Of this group, about 85 percent had moved to the United States since 1965. In 2007, a survey by the Pew Research Center found that 37 percent of Muslim-American immigrants were born in Arab nations, 27 percent were from South Asia (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan), and 12 percent were from Iran. Only 8 percent of Muslim immigrants were born in Europe, and 6 percent came from sub-Saharan Africa.

Crises such as the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the outbreak of the LEBANESE CIVIL WAR in 1975, the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the BOSNIAN WAR of 1992 have prompted increased immigration from affected areas. The 1979 Iranian revolution led to an increase in the number of IRANIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS in the United States. In the 1990s, SOMALI MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS came to the United States to escape famine and conflict in their homeland. Similarly, the Kosovo civil war (1998–99) contributed to a rise in the number of Kosovar-Albanian Muslims living in the United States. By 2001, ethnic diversity had become a hallmark of Islam in the United States, with adherents of the faith tracing their roots to more than 80 nations.

With this diversity came contrasting understandings of Islam. Many immigrants of the late 19th and early 20th centuries typically had grown up in countries struggling to gain independence from colonial powers; their experiences often centered around national rather than religious identity. By the mid-20th century, the spread of socialist governments was reinforcing trends toward secularism in parts of the Muslim world. Immigrants born and raised in secular Muslim communities frequently chose ASSIMILATION into American society.

The Immigration Act of 1965 coincided with two historic movements that facilitated more open expression of Islam among immigrants. One was the U.S. Civil Rights movement. African Americans' quest for equality resulted in legislation that protected religious minorities and immigrants as well as racial minorities. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination based on religion or national origin in employment, education, and access to public accommodations and services. Muslim immigrants who entered the United States under the 1965 Immigration Act therefore enjoyed more safeguards on their right to practice Islam than had earlier immigrants.

A second movement overlapping post-1965 immigration was the rise of religious REVIVALISM. Proponents of Islamist

ideologies, first in Egypt and Pakistan and later in Indonesia, Sudan, Algeria, and other nations, taught that Islam's original teachings, revived and enacted in modern Muslims' lives, could help solve societal problems such as corrupt leadership and excessive materialism. Influenced by these ideas, some immigrants of the 1970s and 1980s were eager to assert Islamic identity and values in American society. They often strove to infuse a stronger Islamic component into the culturally oriented activities of earlier generations of immigrants.

The newly arriving immigrants differed not only from earlier immigrants but also from U.S. citizens who had converted to Islam. Most converts were African Americans, many of whom had come to the religion through Elijah Muhammad's NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) or Sunni Muslim movements, which emphasized black identity and self-determination. The distinctive teachings of the NOI seemed alien if not heretical to many immigrants who had been born Muslim and schooled in classical tenets of Islam. Many immigrants moved into the suburbs far away from inner-city Muslims, and some immigrants explicitly associated African Americans with crime, drug use, and other negative behaviors. So while the 1965 Immigration Act paved the way for Muslims of different backgrounds to meet, exchange ideas, and work together on an unprecedented scale, it also led simultaneously to a racial divide among Muslim Americans.

#### EXPANDING MUSLIM INFLUENCE

Immigrants in the decades following 1965 typically have had higher levels of education and professional training than their predecessors. Unlike the foreign Muslim students who arrived after WORLD WAR II to earn a college or advanced degree and return home, they have been more likely to remain in the United States. Whereas pre-1965 immigrants were often single males who relocated temporarily to the United States for education or employment purposes, subsequent immigrants have included more women and families.

While precise population figures for Muslim Americans remain elusive, counts of mosques are more reliable and point to an increase in Muslims' public visibility since 1965. In 1960, there were about 230 mosques in the United States. By 1980, the number had surpassed 600. In 2001, the United States was home to at least 1,400 mosques, four out of five of which had been constructed since the early 1970s. Muslim neighborhoods, organizations, businesses, and ISLAMIC SCHOOLS have become part of the nation's landscape not only in the historically urban centers of American Islam but also in smaller cities and towns. From Bluefield, West Virginia, to Corvallis, Oregon, from Lewiston, Maine, to Grand Island, Nebraska, Muslim immigrant communities now thrive across the United States.

With post-1965 immigration increasing the size, diversity, and geographic reach of Muslim Americans, their political,

economic, intellectual, and artistic contributions to U.S. society have burgeoned. Many first- and second-generation immigrants have pursued careers in engineering, technology, science, and medicine. Muslims have also gained prominence in academic circles. As more immigrant intellectuals have received appointments to college faculties, students and the public have benefited from their firsthand knowledge of Muslim societies.

Seeking increased participation in local, state, and national affairs, Muslim immigrants have often taken the lead in establishing special interest and civil rights organizations such as the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA and the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS. The agendas of Muslim associations have reflected the changing aspirations of subgroups within the U.S. Muslim community over time. Examples of collective action catalyzed by growth in immigration include workers' petitions for breaks to perform Islamic prayers; parental requests that school cafeterias offer halal foods; lobbying efforts for government recognition of Muslim HOLIDAYS; interfaith dialogue programs; and educational and legal outreach to combat hate crimes, derogatory rhetoric, and DISCRIMINATION against Muslims.

Muslim immigrants' contributions to the arts and popular culture span multiple genres. The best-selling novels of Khaled Hosseini (such as *The Kite Runner* [2003]), stand-up comedy routines of "Allah Made Me Funny," and movies of producer MOUSTAPHA AKKAD (including the blockbuster *Halloween* series) illustrate the flourishing of immigrants' artistic endeavors in the U.S. atmosphere of free expression. In 2006, the Museum of Modern Art in New York presented "Without Boundary: Seventeen Ways of Looking," an exhibition that paid tribute to modern Muslim artists' widely differing perspectives on their faith.

### CONCLUSION

The Immigration Act of 1965 enabled hundreds of thousands of immigrants from the Muslim world to enter the United States, transforming Muslim Americans into a visible and integral part of American society. In the decades since the legislation took effect, Muslim immigrants and their descendants have achieved the critical mass needed to exercise political, economic, and cultural influence. With growing numbers has come greater diversity in understandings of Islam, spurring many Muslims to explore their faith's teachings and to pursue ways of living Islam in contemporary Western contexts. The roles of post-1965 immigrants in policy making, business, science, scholarship, and the arts have confirmed Muslim Americans' significance in the United States and added an important chapter to the nation's rich heritage of immigration.

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**income** See DEMOGRAPHICS.

**Indian-American Muslims** See AMERICAN INDIAN MUSLIMS; SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS.

### Indonesian-American Muslims

The Southeast Asian nation of Indonesia consists of around 15,000 islands that straddle the equator all the way from the Malay Peninsula in the west to Australia in the east. With more



than 300 different ethnic groups and a similar number of languages and dialects spoken, Indonesia is one of most diverse regions in the world. While Buddhist and Hindu religious traditions came to the area before Islam, Islam had become the prevailing religion throughout most of Indonesia by the end of the 16th century. With approximately 85 percent of its more than 200 million citizens identifying as Muslims, it is the largest Muslim-majority country in the world today. Despite Indonesia's large Muslim population, the number of Indonesian Muslims in the United States has remained relatively small. Their experiences in many ways have paralleled the challenges and aspirations of other Muslim communities in the United States who identify strongly with their countries of origin.

#### IMMIGRATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Indonesians migrated to the United States in substantial numbers only in the final decades of the 20th century. Apart from embassy personnel and their families in and around Washington, D.C., the only other identifiable group of Indonesians before this time was comprised of Indonesian students who came to the United States in the 1950s on scholarships provided by what was then the International Cooperation Administration (ICA). Following political turmoil in the 1960s, a large number of ethnic Chinese left Indonesia for the United States to escape harassment and political discrimination. Their arrival coincided with a strong overall increase in the Asian population in the United States as a result of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965. Whereas previous studies had subsumed Indonesians in broader categories such as Asians or Southeast Asians, the 1980 census for the first time included detailed data for Indonesians. It indicated that the population of foreign-born Indonesians in the United States had reached just over 30,000.

Consonant with larger patterns of immigration from Asia, Indonesians initially settled almost exclusively in the urban centers on the West Coast such as LOS ANGELES and San Francisco. The highly urbanized character persisted in the 1970s and 1980s, during which substantial numbers of Indonesians moved farther east to the greater metropolitan areas of Houston and NEW YORK CITY. Owing to their comparatively small numbers and high degree of ethnic diversity, Indonesians usually did not live in clustered areas but were dispersed throughout these urban centers. Although Muslims constituted a strong majority in Indonesia, one scholar estimated that only about 14,000 Indonesian Muslims lived in the United States at the beginning of the 1980s, about half of the overall Indonesian immigrant population at the time.

#### RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL PRACTICES AND ACTIVITIES

The limited number of Indonesian Muslims in the United States and their internal diversity in terms of social classes,

languages, and ethnic backgrounds limited the possibilities for a cohesive Indonesian-Muslim establishment throughout much of the 1980s. Even in places such as Los Angeles and New York City that were home to the largest Indonesian communities, Indonesian Muslims lacked the resources and organizational strength to establish independent Islamic centers and usually frequented the mosques of other ethnic groups, especially for the communal Friday PRAYER. Religious events that reflected more culture-specific customs of Indonesian Muslims were often held in the homes of community members. These included weekly or monthly *pengajian*, or teaching sessions, during which passages from the QUR'AN were discussed, as well as the practice of *tahlilan*, or Qur'anic recitations, to remember the deceased. For the observation of religious HOLIDAYS such as Eid al-Fitr, the end of the Ramadan fast, Indonesian Muslims rented larger venues or, in some instances, celebrated in churches of local Christian communities.

During the last decade of the 20th century, the Indonesian population in the United States rose significantly. According to U.S. census data from the year 2000, more than 70,000 foreign-born Indonesians resided in the United States. The increase was paralleled by a more robust associational life as a result of swelling memberships in cultural organizations such as the Indonesian American Association (Ikatan Keluarga Indonesia) under the auspices of the Indonesian embassy. Healthy trade relations between Indonesia and the United States benefited Indonesians economically as job opportunities increased in export and import industries. These developments contributed to greater organizational strength and cohesion among Indonesians in the United States in general and also facilitated the emergence of a more clearly delineated Indonesian-Muslim establishment. As a result, the Indonesian-Muslim community began to see the emergence of a small number of Indonesian mosques and Islamic centers in the 1990s. Two prominent examples of these efforts were Masjid Al-Hikmah, founded in Queens, New York, in 1995 and the slightly younger Indonesian Muslim Association in America (IMAAM) in Rockville, Maryland, both of which have provided various services to their Indonesian constituencies from weekend schools to legal support with immigration procedures.

#### INDONESIAN-MUSLIM STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Cooperative programs between Indonesian and U.S. universities have existed since the 1950s, primarily in the fields of technology and medicine. The expansion and updating of Indonesia's state system of Islamic higher education, known for its intellectual openness and generally tolerant interpretation of Islamic tradition, led to additional educational partnerships with universities in North America beginning in



the 1970s. These efforts facilitated the entry of Indonesian-Muslim students into Islamic studies programs and the social sciences on American campuses. Although many graduates would return home to Indonesia, others remained in the United States after completing their studies and pursued professional careers. Indonesian-Muslim students thereby contributed to the overall rise in the number of Indonesians in the United States with a four-year college degree, a number that, according to *The Asian Databook*, had risen to 46 percent by 2000.

By the beginning of the 21st century, Indonesian Muslims remained a small minority within the larger American-Muslim community. Despite growing numbers, increasing economic and educational levels, as well as emerging organizational structures, Indonesian Muslims' participation in the broader spectrum of American Islam has been limited. A particularly widely noted example was the involvement of Syamsi Ali from the Indonesian-Muslim community of New York City in the interfaith prayer service at Yankee Stadium following the events of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. For the most part, however, such instances have remained anecdotal and confined to individual efforts. Not unlike other recent immigrant groups, the relatively young Indonesian-Muslim community in the United States has provided its members with the support necessary to make a successful transition to American life.

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**interest** See ISLAMIC FINANCE.

### interfaith movements

Many modern Muslim Americans have argued that Islamic history and the Muslim faith are replete with example of interfaith dialogue and civilizational exchange. From the eighth to the 15th centuries, for example, much of Spain was Muslim, and Al-Andalus (Arabic for Muslim Spain, Andalusia) remains a high point of Islamic civilization. In the ninth and tenth centuries, Córdoba, Spain, became one of the most important cities in the history of the world. Christians and Jews were members of the royal court and active in the intellectual life of the city. Historically, there was also an Islamic presence in southern France, Italy, and Sicily, with ARABIC well known to the educated. And, under Ottoman Turkish rule, there was a profound Muslim presence in Turkey, the Balkans, and elsewhere in eastern Europe.

Muslim Americans have also pointed out how the QUR'AN sets forth perennial principles of humane interfaith behavior. For example, chapter 5, verse 48 explains that human religious diversity is a divine imperative, proclaiming that "for every one of you did We [God] appoint a law and a way, and if God had pleased God would have made you a single people, but that God might try you in what God gave you, therefore strive with one another to hasten to virtuous deeds; to God you will all return, so God will let you know that in which you differed." The prophet MUHAMMAD and other early leaders left Muslims with edifying examples of cooperative relations with religions other than Islam (for example, with the first pilgrimage to Abyssinia, or the Caliph 'Umar refusing to pray in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, lest his followers turn that important Christian site into a mosque). Throughout history, Muslims have existed "in-dialogue" with others. Whether the relationships have been productive or disastrous, Muslims have defined themselves in-dialogue.

### INTERFAITH HISTORY IN NORTH AMERICA

Muslim-American historian Abdullah Hakim Quick has argued that contacts between Muslim civilizations and the Americas existed long before the time of Christopher Columbus. Though most U.S. historians reject his hypothesis, Quick supports his claims by citing an account by the historian Al-Masudi written around 956 that mentions a sailor from Córdoba returning

from a trip across the Atlantic Ocean. There is also a report from the geographer Al-Idrisi (died 1180) of sailors who reached the Americas. Whether one agrees with these historical claims, the important point is that Muslim Americans have claimed an important mythological presence in the beginning of Old World–New World encounters.

Columbus himself, centuries later, brought with him on his voyage Luis de Torres, a *converso* (a Jew who had to convert to Christianity during the *reconquista*, or reconquest, when Christians reclaimed Spain from the Muslims) who could speak Arabic with the people that he met in the Americas (thereby strengthening the case for a much earlier Arabic presence where the native peoples could have learned the language). Of this encounter, scholar Marma Rosa Menocal writes: “The first official diplomatic conversation in the New World took place between Luis de Torres, a Jew of recent conversion, speaking in the lovely Romance-accented Arabic that was the language of both high culture and stunning nostalgia, and a Taíno chief in the hinterlands of Cuba, in the Cubanacán that Columbus took to mean ‘el gran can.’”

Another root of interfaith dialogue was the transatlantic slave trade. Scholars estimate that between 10 and 20 percent of slaves brought to the Americas were Muslim, the majority of whom were forced to convert to Christianity, but some of whom retained their Islamic identity. JOB BEN SOLOMON, for example, was brought to Maryland in 1730. Solomon engaged with Christian missionaries (including his biographer, Thomas Bluett) in interfaith dialogue and helped to explain his Muslim beliefs to them.

An important early figure in this dialogue was ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB, an American born in the Hudson River valley in 1846. In 1888, while U.S. consul to the Philippines, Webb converted to Islam. He gave several lectures in India about Islam in 1892 and founded a monthly magazine in America the next year, the *Moslem World*. Also in 1893, he published a short book, *Islam in America*. He then issued a separate publication, the *Voice of Islam*. In 1895 and 1896, the two journals were published together as *The Moslem World and Voice of Islam*, with the stated purpose “to spread the light of Islamic truth in the United States and to assist in uniting under a common brotherhood all who accept the Moslem faith, intelligently, honestly, unselfishly and sincerely.” He published several other booklets about Islam.

Webb was present for the defining moment of interfaith dialogue in the United States: the first World’s Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. The Ottoman sultan, Abd al-Hamid II, was interested in the Chicago World’s Fair that preceded the parliament but was antagonistic to the parliament itself. As a result, there was minimal Muslim participation, with neither of the invited Muslim guests, Sayyed Ameer Ali or Sayyed Ali Belghrami, accepting their invitations to speak. The presentations on Islam were left to a text writ-

ten by an Arab Jew, J. Sanua Abou Naddara, presentations by Christian missionaries working in the Ottoman Empire, and two addresses by Webb. Prefiguring current issues, Webb emphasized that Islam was the most misunderstood religion in America.

### MODERN INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

There have been modern attempts at dialogue between Christians and Muslims in North America going back at least to the visit by Maulana Muhammad ‘Abdul ‘Aleem Siddiqui. Siddiqui was an Indian Sufi, born in 1892, who traveled extensively and made a trip to North America in 1939. While more properly in the realm of polemics than interfaith dialogue, one could argue that much work was also done in dialogue by the NATION OF ISLAM when their members engaged with African-American Christians in an attempt to convert them to Islam.

Arabs from Lebanon and Syria emigrated to the United States at the end of the 19th century. Later immigrants came from other parts of the Arab world. The distinctions between Christian and Muslim Arabs was lost on Americans of the time, who saw them first as “Turks” and only later as “Arabs.” As a result, Christian and Muslim Arab Americans often worked together, in dialogue.

Another form of interfaith dialogue at the beginning of the 20th century came from the Ahmadi community, founded in India by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Muhammad Sadiq became the first Ahmadi missionary to the United States in 1920. Sadiq moved from NEW YORK CITY to CHICAGO, where, in 1921, he began to publish the magazine *MUSLIM SUNRISE*. The magazine and Sadiq’s mission was to bring both immigrant Muslims and Americans into Islam.

Another early missionary was Hazrat Inayat Khan, a Sufi mystic and musician from India. He came to America in 1910, where he met and married his American wife, Ora Ray Baker. Their son, Pir Vilayet Khan, continued his father’s work in America. He founded the Abode of the Messenger in New York in 1975, as well as the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies in 1977. In 1971, Bawa Muhaiyadeen came to Philadelphia from his home in Sri Lanka, establishing the Bawa Muhaiyadeen Fellowship in 1973. Both Khan and Muhaiyadeen sought to educate Americans about Islam.

Some North American Muslim communities were dependent on support from Christians for early meeting facilities. One example is the Muslim community of Ottawa, Canada, which first began to meet in the basement of a United Church of Canada. Another example is the funeral of MALCOLM X, held in Harlem’s Faith Temple, Church of God in Christ. In addition, Muslim leaders in North America have made a number of comparisons between their communities and Jewish communities. They appreciate that the Jewish communities in North America have built not just

synagogues, but educational facilities and medical centers. Many Muslims want to match the success of the Jewish communities in North America in creating public institutions as well as public support for their religious tradition. One often hears Muslim leaders asking why there are no Muslim universities in America comparable to the American Jewish University or medical centers comparable to Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles when there are large numbers of Muslim academics and medical professionals.

There have also been comparisons made between Muslim and Catholic communities in North America. Amid widespread anti-Catholic sentiment in the 19th century, Catholics created their own educational, cultural, and medical facilities in the United States. Their success is seen as another model for Muslims to follow. Catholic-Muslim dialogue has received official support since the Second Vatican Council, and Muslims and Catholics have often spoken out in solidarity with each other at conferences around the world. A major initiative in Muslim-Christian dialogue was the 2007 letter, "A Common Word between You and Us," sent by a wide variety of Muslim thinkers to a wide variety of Christian leaders. Currently, Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., a Catholic (Jesuit) institution, supports the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding.

Much of the serious work on religious pluralism in America has emerged from the Pluralism Project at Harvard University. This project has its roots in Wilfred Cantwell Smith, the distinguished Canadian scholar of Islam who came to Harvard in 1964 to direct the Center for the Study of World Religions. One of Smith's students was Harvard professor Diana Eck, out of whose 1990 class on world religions the Pluralism Project emerged. Two of the graduate students involved in the project were Eboo Patel and Patrice Brodeur. Patel, an American Muslim, founded the Interfaith Youth Core in 1999 and has achieved both national and international recognition for his interfaith work that puts young people from different religious traditions into contact with each other via community service.

Hartford Seminary in Connecticut is home to the Duncan Black Macdonald Center for Christian-Muslim Relations and also publishes the academic journal *Muslim World*. In June 1990, the seminary organized an international conference entitled "Christian-Muslim Encounter: The Heritage of the Past and Present Intellectual Trends." A useful resource volume, *Christian-Muslim Encounters* was produced as a result of that conference.

There are now a number of Christian-Muslim dialogue groups across the United States. One important one is the Christian-Muslim Consultative Group of Southern California. In addition to arranging lectures and tours of each other's worship spaces, the group started an initiative in 2008 called Standing Together. This initiative pairs a mosque

with a church, both to build long-term relationships between the two and to support each other in the event of a hate crime at either location.

In the United States and Canada, there have been tensions since 2001 between Jewish and Muslim communities, typically over Israeli-Palestinian relations. But there have also been important dialogues. In 2007, the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), founded in 1981 to promote interfaith efforts, invited Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), to speak at their annual convention. In return, Ingrid Mattson, president of ISNA, was invited to speak at the URJ's biennial convention. In 2008, ISNA and URJ created a five-session dialogue program to be used in synagogues and mosques. In 2007, a new initiative entitled NewGround was begun in Los Angeles by the Progressive Jewish Alliance and the MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL.

After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Japanese Americans (both Christian and Buddhist) were the first to stand in solidarity with Muslim Americans. As a result, there has been considerable dialogue between these two communities. Muslim Americans have joined Japanese Americans on their annual pilgrimage to Manzanar National Historic Site in California's Owens Valley. Manzanar was one of the camps where Japanese Americans were interned during WORLD WAR II following the attacks on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

Interfaith work also involves the attendance of non-Muslims at Muslim rituals and celebrations and the attendance of Muslims at non-Muslim religious ceremonies. The result is "American Islams" that influence and in turn are influenced by the other traditions with which they come into contact. And as members of a minority religious tradition, Muslims in North America are aware of the dominant Christian religious tradition. While the majority tradition has not always had to be aware of the minority traditions in its midst, the minorities must always understand the majority culture to survive.

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### **American Islamic Congress “Five Pillars of Interfaith Dialogue” (2006)**

*Headquartered in Hartford, Connecticut, the American Islamic Congress (AIC) was founded after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, to “promote tolerance and the exchange of ideas among Muslims and between other peoples.” Led by Iraqi-American Zainab Al-Suwaij, the AIC joined other Muslim-American organizations in the call for dialogue between Muslims and people of other faiths—and among different groups of Muslims as well. The “five pillars of interfaith dialogue,” excerpted below from a larger guide to interfaith dialogue, was one of countless such efforts, supported by a variety of local, national, and international groups, to build mutual understanding among Muslims and non-Muslims in the face of tragedy.*



Our approach to interfaith dialogue rests on five pillars:

I. *Islam is a dynamic civilization with a rich history.* Islam is not a collection of religious tenets that exist in a vacuum. The development of Islam occurs in historical context. Islam, like all religions, has faced challenges in adjusting to modernity and encountering other religions. Islam is a dynamic civilization that is today in the process of reconciling itself with the challenges of modernity in communities throughout the world.

II. *Islam is not monolithic.* Muslims have a wide diversity of religious and political views. Just as Christians and Jews are not monolithic in their practices and politics, so too are Muslims diverse. For instance, there is the massive ethnic and reli-

gious diversity within Islam, ranging from the skeptics to fundamentalist, Sunnis to Shi'is, Arabs to Indonesians—all of whom represent and participate in . . . the diversity that is Islam.

III. *Break the silence.* We should feel comfortable discussing hot-button cultural and political matters. Muslims can achieve genuine dialogue with others if we generate open dialogue amongst ourselves. We should empower everyone in our community to not feel discouraged or intimidated about speaking their minds. This involves encouraging people to ask difficult questions in a friendly manner and to get to the heart of each other's concerns.

IV. *Self-criticism is a sign of strength.* American Muslims can take the lead in working for a brighter future for the Muslim world. Rather than shy away from shortcomings, we should feel free to address the massive problems facing the Muslim world: the threat posed by radicals who advocate violence and religious supremacy based upon their interpretation of religious texts; the social status of women; the treatment of minorities; and the lack of civil society, democracy, and economic development.

V. *Reach out beyond Jews and Christians.* We should be careful not to limit dialogue to Christianity and Judaism. Given Islam's troubled history with polytheistic and post-Muhammad faiths, we must begin to engage the many other religions that are blossoming in America alongside us: Hindu, Buddhist, Shinto, Baha'i, etc. If we can establish constructive dialogue with these groups, we will be opening up a new chapter in Muslim interfaith dialogue.

### **Getting Started**

There are several steps that you can take to begin organizing and participating in interfaith dialogue events.

\* *Find a dialogue partner.* Contact leaders or active members of your local churches, synagogues, Hindu temples, or other religious or interfaith organizations and simply ask if they would be interested in participating in an interfaith dialogue. It could also be helpful to speak with other members of your local Muslim community beforehand to get a sense of how many people might be interested in attending an interfaith dialogue event.

\* *Start small.* Large-scale events, though desirable, are extremely difficult to organize. It takes experience with planning and attending small-scale



events (e.g., holiday celebration, interfaith meal, joint community service activity) to successfully organize an event that includes hundreds of participants. Smaller-scale events that involve no more than a couple-dozen participants offer the advantage of intimacy, which can better create an atmosphere of sharing and openness.

\* *Forge a bond at the leadership level.* Even if you do not plan to organize an interfaith event for a while, it is very important to establish and maintain a dialogue with leaders of the communities that you hope to engage. If leaders develop a relationship, then it is much easier for community members to follow suit.

\* *Talk ahead of time.* Before participating in an event, meet in advance with non-Muslim leaders to discuss concerns your community members may have with interfaith dialogue. Openness ahead of time will resolve tensions that may exist amongst participants.

\* *Seek ways to continue to build dialogue.* Relationships often fade if they are not maintained. Once an event is planned, you should try to quickly plan future events with the same group and extend the dialogue to other related groups.

### Suggested Activities

Working within the framework of our five pillars of Muslim interfaith dialogue, we propose a set of activities and suggested readings that can be used for conducting interfaith events.

*Islam is a dynamic civilization with a rich history:*

To demonstrate the historical evolution of Islam to event participants, you should craft short lessons, powerpoint presentations, or handouts on specific periods and centers of Islam:

- \* Mecca and Medina during the life of the Prophet Muhammad
- \* Umayyad Damascus
- \* Abbasid Baghdad
- \* Fatimid Cairo
- \* Umayyad Spain
- \* Suleiman the Great in Istanbul
- \* Ottoman Empire

When discussing Muslim life today, it is important to emphasize the recent historical and political context of extremism within Islam in contrast to the long history of Muslim thought and culture.

Muslim history is filled with episodes of cultural flowering, geographical and demographic expansions, ups and downs.

To illustrate: Trace a Muslim concept through its history of interpretations and understandings; e.g. *jihad* (spiritual struggle, defensive war, holy war), *amr bi-l-ma'ruf wa-l-nahi 'an al-munkar* (commanding the right and forbidding the wrong).

*Islam is not monolithic:*

Prepare slide shows or powerpoint presentation that exhibit the many "faces of Islam" with its multiple ethnicities and nationalities. These presentations should also include current demographic statistics.

Read excerpts from different strands of Muslim thought (e.g., Sunni, Shi'i, Sufi). These readings should serve as a starting point for discussing similarities and differences between groups such as Sufis, Sunnis, Shi'is, and Isma'ilis.

Ask each event participant to write down and share five examples of ways "you think you are different from everyone else in the room"—in other words, "What makes your experience unique?" As participants describe their uniqueness, discussion leaders should also encourage people to discuss how others can relate to these unique qualities. Discuss the effects of national identity and local culture on the way Islam is understood and practiced. Compare and contrast the experiences of American, Saudi, Iraqi, Egyptian, Indonesian, Pakistani, and/or Nigerian Muslims.

*Break the silence:*

Ask each event participant to list ten questions that "you want to know the answers to about your own religion and the religions of your fellow participants." Moderators will then present and discuss these questions with the group.

Ask each event participant to list five issues that "you feel get too much attention in your religious community and five issues that get too little attention." Moderators will then present and discuss these questions with the group.

*Self-criticism is a sign of strength:*

Distribute handouts that profile courageous social activists who are taking the lead in the Muslim world to speak out on issues of human rights, minority rights, civil liberties, and/or women's rights.

Ask each event participant to write down five things that "you are most proud of in Islam and

five things that you are least proud of regarding Muslim practice.” Moderators will then present and discuss participant responses. Ask members of other religious groups present to do the same with their religion.

*Reach out beyond Jews and Christians:*

Invite local Hindus and Baha’is to talk about their faiths and attend their cultural/religious events.

Ask to be included on the mailing list of these communities to get a better feel for their programs and for opportunities to join together.

Consider having interfaith panel discussions on issues that are not so religiously charged, e.g., city council elections, faith-based funding, affirmative action, social service funding, local environmental concerns, recycling.



Source: American Islamic Congress. “A New Guide to Muslim Interfaith Dialogue.” Available online. URL: <http://www.ai-congress.org/prog/inter-dial-guide.html>. Accessed January 30, 2009.

### International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT)

The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) was founded in 1981 by ISMAIL AL-FARUQI (1920–86), a seminal figure in the history of Muslim America. Al-Faruqi served as the first director of the institute until his death in May 1986. With its headquarters in Herndon, Virginia, the institute has built and sustained a network of international offices and branches in the United Kingdom, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria, and many other locations.

In 1977, members of the ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS OF NORTH AMERICA (AMSS) and Muslim scholars from the Muslim world and the United States met for a conference in Lugano, Switzerland, where they discussed their concerns about the state of the Muslim world and the decline of scientific and academic activities among contemporary Muslims. Among them was Ismail al-Faruqi. They concluded that a specialized body or institution would be necessary to analyze the reasons for such a decline and to develop a plan for lifting the global community of Muslims into prosperity and intellectual vibrancy. The intellectual project became known as the “Islamization of Knowledge” project.

In a seminal publication, “Islamization of Knowledge: Principles and Workplan” (1982), al-Faruqi and his colleague AbdulHamid AbuSulayman identified the crisis of knowledge as caused by the clash between Western social and natural sciences and Islamic values. They argued that Western epistemology had developed on the basis of a particular ethical

and value system that could not directly be applied to Islamic ideas of knowledge and ethical thought. Thus, what was required to combat the cognitive tension between Western systems of knowledge and Islamic values was an intellectual project to harmonize the two. This goal would be achieved by applying the lessons of a reformed version of Islamic thought to the global problems of humanity.

In its practical application, the project has influenced the scholarly activities of several generations of Muslim scholars who have worked on the mastery and revival of traditional Islamic sciences, such as the study of the QUR’AN, and Sunna, and the development of modern interpretations of the sacred sources of Islam. In addition, the institute has fostered the contemporary academic study of Muslim societies within and outside the framework of American academia. Programs have included seminars, conferences, and workshops at locations all over the world and the publication of books and brochures in English and ARABIC. Since 1984, IIIT has been the copublisher (with AMSS) of the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, a peer-reviewed academic quarterly.

Initially anticipated as an independent Islamic institution of higher education, IIIT in the 1990s supported the establishment of the Graduate School of Islamic Social Sciences, which trained imams and Muslim chaplains. After 2001, the school was reorganized and renamed the Fairfax Institute, which has been described as the instructional division of IIIT. It has provided courses, internships, and scholarship programs on Islamic sciences and topics such as Muslims in America.

In the aftermath of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, IIIT and a number of affiliated organizations and businesses were subject to an FBI investigation over alleged funding of terrorist activities. No indictments or arrests were made, but the investigation and public scrutiny prompted a process of rethinking and restructuring of the institute and resulted in an increase in outreach and education programs for non-Muslims.

*Juliane Hammer*

### Further Reading

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## Internet

From its origins as a communications network for scientists and the defense industry in the 1980s, the Internet grew from a novelty into an integral part of life for many Americans by the 1990s. Muslim Americans have produced and consumed Internet content from the beginning of the World Wide Web. By the 21st century, the ever-growing expanse of cyberspace was replete with Islamic content and information on Islam and Muslims useful to Muslims and non-Muslims, researchers, and curious surfers. These Web sites catered to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Some covered the practicalities of worship for practicing Muslims (PRAYER times, the dates for Ramadan), while others present opinions on esoteric or academic questions of Islamic jurisprudence, or legal interpretation, and still other sites educate readers on the basics of Muslim culture.

### EARLY SITES

The World Wide Web became publicly available on the Internet in 1991. The first Web browsers, Netscape and Internet Explorer, were introduced in 1994 and 1995, respectively. These browsers allowed the public to surf the Internet

for the first time by typing Web site names or searching for texts. The earliest Web sites were static affairs that resembled newspapers or scroll-down texts. Started in 1997 and made publicly available in 1999, the Internet Sacred Text Archive ([www.sacred-texts.com](http://www.sacred-texts.com)) assembled the scriptures for all the major world religions, including Islam. The Islamic section today includes the QUR'AN in ARABIC and several translations, as well as hadith, the sayings and deeds of the prophet MUHAMMAD and his companions, Sufi texts, and Shi'a documents.

A number of universities followed with translations of the Qur'an and hadith, along with commentary. These have included ongoing projects by the University of Southern California, Fordham University, Brown University, and the University of Michigan. The earliest of these, the University of Michigan's Humanities Text Initiative, began in 1994. After hypertext, the next step was to provide a searchable database of Qur'anic verses by theme, images, or words mentioned. With these sites, one can search for a particular verse of the Qur'an or consult the holy text for specific revelations or religious details. Most significantly for Muslim Americans who may not



Using the Internet, a Muslim reporter attending the Florida Summit on Global Climate Change writes a report on a laptop at the Intercontinental Hotel in Miami, Florida. (Jeff Greenberg/PhotoEdit)

read or understand Arabic, these Web sites offer the Qur'an in translation, often with columns in English.

At the same time, e-mail provided a new and indispensable avenue of communication for Muslim Americans and their coreligionists around the world. With e-mail, subject-oriented listservs and chat groups also flourished. Newsgroups preceded social networking sites or blogging as a means of communicating with select few subscribers on specific issues. Among 1995's newsgroups were soc.religion.islam and alt.religion.islam.

### MULTIMEDIA SITES

As creating Web pages became easier and more user-friendly, more Muslim Americans established a Web presence. Founded in 1995, the Culver City, California-based IslamiCity ([www.islamicity.com](http://www.islamicity.com)) was one of the first sites to combine rolling text, an online bazaar, and multimedia streams from outside sources. From a few hundred visitors in 1995, the site boasted 24 million annually by 2008. The evolution of the site [www.islamicfinder.com](http://www.islamicfinder.com) has highlighted the move from static Web pages to multimedia portals. In 1997, the spare site could locate a mosque by zip code and linked users to prayer tables. It also offered an online mall, a recipe collection, matrimonial listings, and the more traditional Qur'anic downloads. A director for Islamic products and services worked for the site, which came to feature downloadable *adhans*, or calls to prayer, and prayer times sent to mobile telephones by text.

Some Web sites described the correct forms of prayer and practice as missionary work. These Web sites encouraged all human beings to "revert" to Islam, taking the position that all human beings are by nature Muslims and that they become members of another religion after birth. These type of sites also encouraged nonobservant Muslims to renew their commitment to Islamic religion. Such missionary movements have often relied on direct communication, and the Web has provided an efficient means to further their goals. For example, [www.Readingislam.com](http://www.Readingislam.com) extolled the importance of such missionary work, and IslamiCity published the number of affiliated conversions on its home page.

### MAJOR ORGANIZATIONS ONLINE

As the Internet gained prominence, an official Web site became almost mandatory for large organizations serving the public. In the United States, the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA), established in 1982, became the largest umbrella group of Muslim-American organizations by the end of that decade. ISNA went online in 1997. The ISNA Web site featured an extensive array of information including job boards, links to Islamic finance and mortgage sites, information on imam (religious leader) training, and links to all participating groups. The ISNA Web site also offered

users forms for writing wills and living trusts that accorded with both state law and SHARI'A, or Islamic law and ethics.

Other Muslim-American organizations have used the Web to publicize and rally support for what has been called progressive Islam. For example, Muslim WakeUp began as an organization in the 1980s but created a Web site in 2003 that cemented its status as an activist voice of Muslim Americans committed to peace, INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS, FEMINISM, and other progressive political positions. The Web site reached out to LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER MUSLIMS and included sections called "Sex and the Ummah" and "Hug-a-Jew," which showed solidarity with Jewish Americans sympathetic to Muslim causes.

MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS have also posted Web sites that contain special events, prayer times, religious information, and local bulletin boards. The Islamic Society of Boston Web site ([www.isboston.org](http://www.isboston.org)), which went live in 2001, included a bulletin board that advertised everything from matrimonials to Maytag clothes dryers. Beyond local announcements, the site also presented an "Islam 101" section that described the basic requirements of Islamic religious practice and the meaning of Islamic terms. At the national and international levels, Sheikh HAMZA YUSUF used the Web to establish himself as an Islamic authority who intimately understood the specific challenges faced by Muslim Americans. In 1996, Yusuf founded the ZAYTUNA INSTITUTE, a center for traditional Islamic learning in California. Zaytuna's Web site ([www.zaytuna.org](http://www.zaytuna.org)) included programs in online distance learning. By the 21st century, various Muslim Americans and other English-speaking Muslims from around the world used the site to consult Yusuf's opinions and explore the institute's online publications.

The MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA), which had chapters all over the United States, also hosted a site that became popular among Muslim Americans. By the 1990s, the MSA used its Web site to assist students wanting to start a chapter on their own campus. In addition, the site included resources to help campuses organize national Islamic Awareness week and advertised activities for students interested in community service. Individual college and university MSAs also posted their own Web sites.

Many Web sites appealed specifically to the experiences of African-American Muslims. In 1996, Louis Farrakhan's NATION OF ISLAM established a Web site with religious and political information, including a newspaper, *The Final Call*. SILIS MUHAMMAD, another, lesser-known claimant to the legacy of ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, used his Web site to explain his interpretation of Nation of Islam teachings and to advocate for reparations to all African Americans for slavery. Striking a very different tone, African-American SUNNI leader W. D. MOHAMMED discussed his interfaith activities on his New Africa Radio site.



### ISLAMIC PORTALS

Beyond these national organizations, a number of “umbrella” Web sites fashioned sophisticated Web interfaces that offered a variety of services and content. For example, *Islam Online* ([www.islamonline.net](http://www.islamonline.net)), which attracted 1.5 million unique visitors per month in 2006, provided an important example of a Web site frequently consulted by Muslim Americans and Muslims abroad. The Sunni Muslim scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi launched the site in 1996. The content on *islamonline.net* encompassed news, information, a cyber counselor who offered advice on social and religious issues, and a team of legal scholars who provided live fatwas, or religious opinions.

### PERSONAL WEB SITES

In the 21st century, personal Web sites—the purview of academic, religious, or political authorities as well as online personalities or bloggers—have become increasingly popular. Blogs can serve as personal diaries or collections of articles and entries on specialized topics. They can cover any subject, and the list of Islam-related blogs is virtually endless.

Community imams, or religious leaders, created Web sites that reached beyond their respective communities. In 2005, Talal Imam Eid, formerly of the Islamic Center of New England, became “an imam without a mosque.” As soon as Eid lost his physical headquarters, he immediately established an online address: [www.imamtalaleid.com](http://www.imamtalaleid.com).

The young Pakistani-American blogger Hijabman acquired a devoted following for his blog on Muslim-American social issues and for his “Muslim hipster” T-shirts. The blog, *veiled4allah* ([www.muhammadah.com](http://www.muhammadah.com)), spoke to Muslim women who wear the *hijab*, or head scarf. Robert Salaam, another prolific blogger and online personality, created the American Muslim Blog at <http://salaamsblog.wordpress.com>. Perhaps more than official Web sites, the expanding blogosphere best expressed the diverse opinions and day-to-day thoughts of Muslim-American YOUTH.

### AFTER 9/11

The SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon brought Islam-oriented Web sites under greater scrutiny. The passage of the USA PATRIOT ACT in 2001 led to cases such as that of Sami Omar al-Hussayen, who was prosecuted for serving as a webmaster and moderator on Web sites that advocated support of suicide bombings. Some sites such as [www.azzam.com](http://www.azzam.com) showed sympathy for the Taliban and similar movements. [Meemsites.com](http://Meemsites.com), registered in New York, included clips of battles in Chechnya and many accounts of “martyrdom.” By the end of 2002, all of these sites had been closed down. At the same time, many moderate Muslim Web sites and organizations reported hate mail, spam, and “cyber-terrorism.” As a result of this harassment, some Web sites were forced to shut down.

Internet chat groups were responsible for disseminating some of the erroneous information—both pro- and anti-Muslim—that prevailed after the 9/11 attacks. These rumors included the idea that Jewish employees had been told not to report for work on that day as well as the e-mail rumor that Detroit Arabs danced in the streets and celebrated at the fall of the twin towers and the attack on the Pentagon. But the Internet also served to dispel such rumors and misinformation. Muslim-American sites combated Islamophobia and conveyed a more accurate portrayal of Islam to worried non-Muslims, while also providing solace and a sense of community to embattled and equally worried Muslim Americans. The same day as the attacks, the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR) issued a statement on its Web site condemning the terrorist attacks and asked Muslim Americans to donate blood and help the relief efforts in any way.

The U.S. State Department recognized the importance of the Internet in reaching Muslims when it created a page on “Muslim Life in America” (<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/muslimlife>, October 12, 2002). The Internet became an important part of Karen Hughes’s strategy as undersecretary of state for public diplomacy to focus on Muslim Americans. Islam on the Internet also led the State Department to create its Digital Outreach Team, a group of bloggers who post pro-U.S. statements and retorts on Web sites and in chat rooms.

The Internet also grew into a powerful tool for encouraging political participation among U.S. Muslims. The Web site of CAIR, which works to prevent and address discrimination against Muslim Americans, included a section devoted to governmental and legislative issues. Since 2000, it has used the Web to organize its voter registration drives, offering voter information and counsel on racial and religious profiling affecting Muslim Americans. In 2008, YallaVote ’08 ([www.yallavote.org/tag/muslim-americans](http://www.yallavote.org/tag/muslim-americans)), an initiative of the Arab American Institute, attempted to register Muslim voters in preparation for the presidential election.

### SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social networking sites have proven especially effective at mobilizing Muslims around political, lifestyle, or cultural interests. In the United States, social networking sites such as [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com), [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com), and others have become hugely popular in the 21st century. Muslim sites have also joined the social networking craze. The Web site [www.naseeb.com](http://www.naseeb.com), launched in 2003, gave members the chance to chat, post articles and pictures, and ask one another for advice. In fact, the Internet has revolutionized the way Muslim Americans date and marry. Some Muslim sites and chat rooms have operated as safe space where Muslims seeking mates can meet and talk with little social pressure and with relative anonymity. In addition, many Muslim and non-Muslim Web sites offer matrimonial advertisements in which men and women

can specify their marital preferences according to sect, ethnicity, language, and religious ideology. Muslims from the Indian subcontinent have turned to the popular [www.shaaadi.com](http://www.shaaadi.com), which blends typical dating services with specifically Islamic marital advice. Shaadi.com is the oldest such site, but competitors catering to every sect and specificity emerged over the last decade. For ISMA'ILI MUSLIM AMERICANS, [www.nargisbai.com](http://www.nargisbai.com) makes matches, while other SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICANS can turn to [www.shiachat.com](http://www.shiachat.com).

In the 1990s, online shopping also became popular among all Americans navigating the web. Muslim-American entrepreneurs quickly recognized a market for religious paraphernalia, books, and clothing. Sites for Islamic finance, mortgage, and banking products advertised their products. Guidance Financial Group, for instance, counseled Muslims through the difficulty of home financing through alternative Islamic mortgages, since many Muslims understand usury to be outlawed by shari'a. Other sites offered information on FOOD and restaurants that followed Islamic dietary guidelines.

#### FATWA SHOPPING

In the late 20th century, Muslim Americans increasingly turned to the Internet for advice on legal and religious matters. Scholars of the shari'a regularly offered fatwas, or religious opinions, in response to often anonymous questions posted to a site. Such discussions—too private or embarrassing to be discussed in person with an imam—covered everything from sex and dating to hygiene, prayer, and philosophy. For example, on October 11, 2008, a questioner on [www.sunnipath.com](http://www.sunnipath.com) asked whether the use of chemical hair dyes invalidates ablutions before prayer. Faraz Rabbani answered that they do not. The Web site divided questions into categories that include the opinions of differing Islamic legal schools, men's and women's health questions, and sexual intimacy. The Islamic Medical Association of North America also adopted a question-and-answer format to address issues of medical ethics and treatment within an Islamic framework.

A variety of religious opinion appeared by imams in the United States and imams from abroad. Muslim Americans could consult the views of several different schools of thought, including [www.sunnipath.com](http://www.sunnipath.com), which answered questions from the perspective of the Islamic school of legal interpretation called the Hanafi school, in addition to enrolling visitors in the "Online Islamic Academy."

In sum, the Internet became a site for the expression of a full range of religious views, and Muslim Americans, like other wired Muslims around the world, could engage in what came to be known as "fatwa shopping." At once innovative and worrying, fatwa shopping may have undermined the authority of more traditional scholars of shari'a. Online experts did not need a diploma from a seminary or the per-

mission of a nation-state to issue their religious opinions. Cyber Islam expressed the intolerant and violent views of extremists and the pro-peace, pro-gay pronouncements of progressives alike.

#### DIVERGENT VOICES

Other groups besides Sunni Muslims have also benefited from the Internet. For instance, the URL [www.alislam.org](http://www.alislam.org) does not belong to a large umbrella site such as IslamOnline or IslamiCity but represents the relatively smaller Ahmadiyya Muslim community. Shi'a Muslim-American groups have their own Web sites, and one of them, the Khoja Ithna Ashari community of North America, has been especially active in organizing and mobilizing online.

SUFISM has also adapted well to the opportunities of cyberspace. Since the 1990s, the Internet has allowed Sufism to travel to homes and offices across the United States. Sufi Muslim Americans have developed loyalties to a particular *tariqa*, or branch, that may be located far away from their domiciles. Most Sufi Web sites have posted information about their style of *dhikr*, the ritual meant to help the followers achieve a closer relationship with God. For example, the NAQSHBANDI SUFI ORDER has maintained a Web site where the surfer can download readings and recitations of *dhikr*. Other sites have deemphasized religion and instead drawn attention to the health and lifestyle aspects of Sufism. The Sufi Order of the West, [www.sufiorder.com](http://www.sufiorder.com), represents one such Sufi site. A site such as [www.sufilovematch.com](http://www.sufilovematch.com) is a matrimonial service for members of Sufi orders where they can meet a potential mate who shares their values and spiritual orientation.

Finally, gay and lesbian Muslims have been much more open online than offline. Because Muslim-American communities, like many other American religious communities, have often discriminated against gays and lesbians, many LGBT Muslims turn to the Internet as a safe space where they can meet and organize. The Al-Fatiha Foundation, for example, has provided support and legal advocacy for LGBT Muslims. Their Web site, [www.al-fatiha.org](http://www.al-fatiha.org), has featured information on retreats and conferences, as well as relevant news stories. In the past, less formalized Web sites and Web groups such as Queer Jihad or Queer Muslims have also flourished in cyberspace. Queer Jihad, an American Web site calling for tolerance and acceptance of gays and lesbians, operated from 1997 to 2005.

#### CONCLUSION

The Internet, and all its consequent innovations in communication and expression, have helped Muslim Americans practice their religion and stay connected to coreligionists regardless of background or geographic location. Muslims have found a home in the new world of the Internet that is just as dynamic and rewarding as the homes they have made

in the new world of a multicultural America. Moreover, Muslim Internet activity has had an impact on America as a whole. For many Americans, the Internet is their first point of contact not just with Muslim America but with Islam and Muslims in general. Whether they watch a Muslim comedian on YouTube or listen to a *nasheed* on IslamOnline, Americans will encounter a religion and a community far more varied than an image on a television screen.

Saminaz Zaman

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### Recommended Web Sites

<http://cmcu.georgetown.edu/>  
<http://grandquran.com/>  
<http://www.ahmadiyya.org>  
<http://www.albalagh.net>  
<http://www.al-fatiha.org/>  
<http://www.askimam.com>  
<http://www.askjerrahi.com>  
<http://www.brothermalcolm.net>  
<http://www.cair-net.org>  
<http://www.crescentwatch.org>  
<http://www.hiiraan.com>  
<http://www.hijabman.com>  
<http://www.hti.umich.edu>

<http://www.ibntv.com>  
<http://www.ijtihad.com>  
<http://www.imana.org>  
<http://www.irw.org>  
<http://www.isboston.org>  
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<http://www.islamicfinder.com>  
<http://www.islamicity.com>  
<http://www.islamonline.net>  
<http://www.isna.org>  
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<http://www.mosque.com>  
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<http://www.muhababah.com>  
<http://www.muslimwakeup.com>  
<http://www.noi.org/>  
<http://www.pmuna.org>  
<http://www.sacred-texts.com/isl/bukhari/index.htm>  
<http://www.shaadi.com>  
<http://www.sunnipath.org>  
<http://www.theamericanmuslim.org>  
<http://www.twomuslimgirls.com>  
<http://www.uga.edu/Islam>  
<http://www.ummah.com>  
<http://www.universalsufism.com>  
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<http://www.zaytuna.org>  
<http://www3.alislam.org>

### Souhail Hasan Mulla

#### Online Advice for Muslim Parents (2004–06)

*For many Americans, whether Muslim or not, the World Wide Web has become a marketplace, a school, and a virtual community. By the beginning of the 21st century, Muslim Americans were using the Internet to purchase Islamic dress, educate non-Muslims about Islam, and speak with one another in Muslim chat rooms and in online forums. For instance, Souhail Hasan Mulla, a Muslim-American social worker, has shared advice on child rearing with Muslim parents through the Web site of the Muslim American Society. In addition to holding a B.A. in African-American studies and a master's degree in social work, Mulla has been program director of the West Valley Boys and Girls Club and has worked in the Los Angeles Unified School District's Sylmar Juvenile Hall, one of the largest juvenile detention centers in the country. But his online advice has not addressed many issues related to juvenile crime. Instead, much of this social worker's counsel answers questions about how to help a student fit in better at school, how to lead children toward good career choices, and what to do about problems faced by girls who wear the hijab in public school. The following excerpts appeared online in 2004, 2005, and 2006.*



Q. I don't feel comfortable to send my daughter to a public middle school. I am so worried of doing so. Her older brothers are in public schools. But I am worry she might suffer with her *hijab* [scarf]. The problem is that there are no other options. We don't have Islamic middle or high schools in our area. What do you suggest?

A. We love to hear about young sisters who carry themselves as upright Muslims from a young age. The younger our children practice Islam, the stronger their Islam will develop as they grow older. This is something that you as a parent should be pleased with. At some point, sister, all of our daughters must step out into an environment where they will stick out because of their dress. On a positive note, we have numerous young girls who have gone to public schools in our community and have reported very few problems. More likely than not, your daughter will fit right in and make friends and these friends will be there to stand up for her if she ever does have any problems. Also you, as the mother, should always follow up with your daughter to see how things are going at school. There is a lot she will not tell you if you don't ask. It is possible that your daughter will be looked at differently because of the *hijab*. But this is what we want, we want the general public to know a Muslim woman when they see one and we don't want our women to be looked at the way other women are looked at (i.e., sex objects, etc.). It may also happen that she will be treated differently, possibly made fun of, etc. I don't say these things to scare you or your daughter, but only to get you mentally prepared for what you may or may not face as she begins middle school. After saying all that, you should take this as an opportunity to teach your daughter a very valuable life lesson. And that is that we do our best to follow the commandments of Allah and after that we leave the results up to Him and after taking all of the necessary steps, we leave ourselves under His protection.

Q. I would like to hear your opinion concerning the home schooling. Do you recommend this idea for our daughters? My husband insists on moving our daughter to home schooling believing that he is protecting her from the outside society, which could affect her in a negative way. I feel that by

doing so, my daughter will loose a lot and her chance for a better education will decrease. This is in addition to the other side effects, such as isolating her from the outside society, community and friends. Please help me because I am so confused.

A. Dear Sister, you have raised an issue that almost every Muslim family struggles with; that is, "What type of school should I send my children to?" The options include public, private, Islamic, and home schooling. Home schooling is the least frequently chosen option. I am personally not a big proponent of home schooling. I believe that a child's full potential can be brought out best in a regular school setting where the child can interact with teachers, other students and other school staff. Cooperative learning is becoming a more commonly used method in teaching, and this is something that cannot take place in a one-on-one teacher/student relationship. Also, there are valuable social and life skills that are learned in a regular school setting that cannot be taught in a home schooling situation. Besides, to be involved with and to interact with other people, is closer to the experiences of life after school and is not something that can be taught as theory but is something that must be experienced. Some people think they are shielding their children from certain negative elements in society by home schooling their children. They may be shielding them from certain elements for the time-being, but what is going to happen when their children have to face these same negative elements after they leave the protective home environment? They will not have the same ability to cope with these issues as those who have encountered and learned to deal with these issues throughout their life. In addition, if home schooling is decided as the course a family is going to take with their children, all parties involved should be in *agreement* and *capable* for it to be an optimal learning situation. 95+% of the time the mother is the primary teacher when a child is home schooled and it can be an immense burden for her if she is not ready for [the] task. Therefore, she should be doing it of her own free will and she should be scholastically capable of teaching all the material that any regular teacher must have command of. The mother must also be capable of transforming her home into a school and providing a strict, compartmentalized daily schedule of study just as a regular school provides. Allah knows best.



Q. I allowed my son to get out with his non-Muslim friends to play. He is not a young kid and I trust him, but I feel that there is a bad influence. As a father, when I think about it, I feel that they don't have the same background and they can't meet at one point. I mean someone should be influenced by the other and would try to meet with the other in the middle. I don't want my son to sacrifice his principles for the sake of friendship, but meanwhile I feel sorry for him for not having friends. What do you think?

A. Dear Brother, we share your concerns that you have for your son. The parental instinct that makes you feel that there is a bad influence among his friends is not something that should be ignored because it is something that comes from Allah. Parents know their children better than anyone else, and Allah has endowed them with the ability to know when they are going astray. You are absolutely correct about the fact that when two people are involved in a relationship or friendship they influence each other. Usually, the stronger personality has a greater influence and in this case it sounds like your son is being influenced by these stronger influences. There are numerous steps you can take to try to improve your son's situation. First of all, you should invite your son's friends over so that you can see who they are and get to know them. Have a BBQ, or some other activity that your son's friends would enjoy. After this meeting, you can discuss your son's relationship with his friends and you will be able to better gauge the extent of his friendship with particular individuals. Also, make sure you know your son's whereabouts at all times. You are the father and must regulate when and where he goes. One other very, very important step you must take is to try and connect your son with other Muslim youth. You should look to a local youth group, try to find a local *halaqa* [an Islamic study group] or find some outlet where he can connect with other Muslim youth. There is nothing else that can guarantee your son staying on the right track more than having good Muslim companionship.

Q. As parents, we need to encourage our kids when they do good things, but sometimes we need to punish them. In this country it is too hard to use your hands with your kids, although it helps them learning and to never forget what they

learned. Do you believe that we could raise our kids well without using our hands?

A. Thank you for bringing up a very important point. My answer: We can *definitely* raise good children without having to raise our hands towards them. In fact, I believe that it is best not to punish our children with our hands. There is much debate as to whether or not physical punishment should be used with children. Most of this research tells us that we are much better off having a discipline system that doesn't include physical punishment. Our Prophet, peace be upon him, was never known to raise his hand against any of his children, nor against anyone else in his household. He is our example in all aspects of life, including his role as a parent. Shouldn't we follow his example?

Q. Dear Respected Brother: I am father of two boys. My old son wants to be an artist. I tried to convince him to select medicine, engineering or law, but he doesn't accept. He is very talented, but art is not a job. He could draw whenever he has extra time, but our nation doesn't need artists at this time. The problem is that his mother doesn't see any problem with her old son being an artist. I know art is good as a talent, but not as a career. Could you give me some tips on how to convince him or whom could convince from our Muslim scholars?

A. Dear Brother, May Allah bless you and your family and may Allah make your children from among our future leaders. Ameen. ["Amen" in Arabic.] This scenario that you bring forth is a common scenario that plays out . . . in this society. In this society, there are many opportunities in many different fields, which is in stark contrast to the opportunities that exist in many Muslim countries. At any given university, you can find up to one hundred different majors; educational opportunities are not just confined to law, medicine, teaching, and engineering, as they may be in certain Muslim countries. This same opportunity also plays itself out in the actual real world—the work world. There are many opportunities in many different fields. I advise you to do some research with your son. See what opportunities art may afford him. For example, in today's technological world, computer graphic art is a very respectable field into which many artists go and do very well for themselves, may I add. Art

is more than just drawing and painting pictures and, Allah knows best, there may be something out there for your son. Allah gives different talents and abilities to whomsoever he wishes. The good thing is that this society embraces creativity in the arts. At least, explore the possibilities and see if there are any viable avenues for him in this field. Three last comments: 1) Please look at my bio on the Web site and see what I got my bachelor's degree in (if you knew my ethnicity you would be even more surprised!). Even with that I was able to eventually find a field for myself in which now I do quite well for myself, *alhamdulillah* [praise be to God]! 2) We have enough Muslim doctors and engineers (there is an unfortunate need now for more Muslim lawyers though). It is about time Muslims started spreading themselves out into other fields. 3) At least he did not say that he wants to be an actor!



Source: Souhail Mulla. "Online Advice about Muslim Youth." Muslim American Society, November 2, 2004; December 7, 2004; December 28, 2004; and March 15, 2005. Available online. URL: [http://www.masnet.org/discussion\\_archive.asp](http://www.masnet.org/discussion_archive.asp). Accessed August 23, 2006.

### **Iranian-American Muslims**

Iranian Americans are people of Iranian ancestry who live in the United States. Iran has a population of more than 65 million people of varying ethnicities. The majority of Iranians are Persians (58 percent). They speak Persian or one of its dialects. There are also large minorities of Turkic (26 percent) and Kurdish (9 percent) Iranians in the northwestern and western provinces of Iran. Other smaller but nonetheless significant minority communities include Luris, Arabs, Baluchis, Armenians, and Jews. Religiously Iran is much more homogenous. About 89 percent of Iranians are Twelver Shi'i Muslims. About 9 percent are Sunni Muslims. The remaining 2 percent consist of Jews, Assyrian Christians, Armenian Christians, Zoroastrians, and Baha'is. All of these ethnicities and religions have come to be present in the United States, but their exact demographic distribution within the Iranian-American population is unknown. Since many members of Iran's religious minorities emigrated from Iran following the Islamic revolution of 1979, they are more widely represented in the Iranian diaspora than they are in Iran. In general, the history of Iranians in the United States has reflected the extent and nature of the interaction between the American and Iranian states.

### **THE FIRST IMMIGRANTS**

In the modern era, until 1935, Iran was known as Persia, a name derived from the southwestern region of Asia known as Persis or Pars, which is modern-day Fars. This is the region from which the ancient Persian Achaemenid Empire emerged in the sixth century B.C.E. In 1935, at the initiative of the then ruler of Persia, Reza Shah Pahlavi (r. 1921–41), Persia was renamed Iran to invoke the memory of the larger and older Aryan (or Iranian) populations that inhabited western and central Asia before the rise of the Achaemenid Empire. In 1979, in the wake of the overthrow of the Pahlavi dynasty by a popular Islamic revolution, the country was renamed Islamic Republic of Iran. Iranian-American Muslims refer to themselves interchangeably as Iranians and Persians. Those who wish to disassociate themselves from the Islamic government of Iran are more likely to call themselves Persians than Iranians.

The first immigrants to the United States from the region known today as Iran were mostly Assyrian and Armenian Christians from Urmia, in northwestern Iran. These Iranian Christians became familiar with the United States as result of encounters with American missionaries to the region. There is no reliable data available for the number of these immigrants. A preliminary study of immigration and passenger lists from NEW YORK CITY, BOSTON, and PHILADELPHIA suggests that the United States received about 250 immigrants from Urmia during the first decade of the 20th century and about 800 in the second. Immigration officials began recording the number of Iranians who became permanent residents of the United States in 1920. According to the *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (2007), published by the Department of Homeland Security, 208 Iranians came to reside permanently in the United States from 1920 to 1929, 198 from 1930 to 1939, and 1,144 from 1940 to 1949.

Most of these early Iranian immigrants were among the religious minorities of Iran. In addition to Christians, some Baha'is immigrated to the United States during the first half of the 20th century. Since the Baha'i religion grew out of a 19th-century messianic Shi'a movement in Iran known as the Babi Movement, many conservative Shi'a scholars regarded Baha'is as apostates from Islam. Given Baha'ism's messianic roots, the Iranian government also viewed the early Baha'i movement as a political threat. Consequently, throughout their history in Iran, the Baha'is have been periodically persecuted by both the state and conservative Shi'a clerics. Since Baha'ullah founded the Baha'i religion in the 1860s, many Baha'is have left Iran because of persecution, exile, or zeal for spreading their faith. From 1892 to 1921, under the leadership of Baha'ullah's son and successor, 'Abbas Effendi Abdul Baha', Baha'ism spread to North America. Abdul Baha' himself visited various cities of the United States to proselytize in 1912. According to early surveys of "religious bodies" conducted

by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, there were 1,280 Baha'is in the United States in 1906. This number rose to 2,884 in 1916. In 1926, following WORLD WAR I and the Immigration Act of 1924, which restricted the entry of new immigrants from Asia, the number of Baha'is dropped to 1,247, only to rise to 2,584 in 1936. While many of the Baha'is counted in these censuses were American-born converts, there were undoubtedly also some Iranian-born Baha'is among them.

Not until the 1950s did Iranian Muslims began to immigrate to the United States in noticeable numbers. Most of these immigrants originally came as students who wished to gain technical knowledge and skills to help modernize Iranian bureaucracies, universities, hospitals, and businesses. Some, however, decided to stay. A report published by the Bureau of the Census in 1984 shows that out of 121,505 Iranian-born citizens of the United States in 1980, 2,565 had immigrated to the United States before 1950. Between 1950 and 1959, 4,351 had immigrated, and 11,843 between 1960 and 1969. The rate of increase in the number of Iranian immigrants to the United States correlates with the rate of increase in the number of Iranian foreign students in the United States during the same period. According to the Institute of International Education, there were 466 Iranian students in the United States during the 1948–49 academic year. By 1955–56, their number had more than doubled to 1,011. In 1960, there were 2,507 Iranian students in the United States, about a third of whom had begun their studies in 1959–60. In 1970, there were 5,175 Iranian students in the United States, a fifth of whom began their studies in 1969–70. Throughout this period, Iranians represented by far the largest number of foreign students from the Middle East. In 1970, for example, there were five Iranian students in the United States for every two Israeli students, and there were more Iranian students than from all Arab countries combined.

Iranians' increased interest in studying in the United States was related on the one hand to the bureaucratic and technical needs of the developing nation-state and on the other to the rising influence of the United States in Iran during WORLD WAR II and the weakening of European empires following that war. From the 1940s through the early 1960s, most Iranians traveled to Europe for their higher education. Before that, in the interwar period, the few who traveled abroad for their education often went to schools in British-ruled India. As increased demand for oil made the Middle East increasingly more significant to U.S. interests and as the United States, a superpower engaged in a cold war with the Soviet Union, became more involved in the affairs of Middle Eastern countries, there was a marked shift in Iran's strategic alliances from Europe toward the United States. This shift was symbolically represented by two major events: the return of Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi (r. 1941–79) from exile to Tehran in a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency airplane follow-

ing a covert British- and U.S.-sponsored coup d'état against a popular, nationalist prime minister, Mohammad Mosaddeq, in 1953; and British abandonment of control over Iranian oil reserves through the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (which became the British Petroleum Company in 1954). Following these events, Iran was widely recognized as a client state of the United States, both dependent on and essential to U.S. policies in the Middle East.

Rising oil prices in the mid- to late-1970s resulted in a boom in the Iranian economy, particularly for urban professionals, which helped finance a major increase in the number of Iranian students who traveled abroad for their studies. On the eve of the Iranian revolution of 1979, there were 45,340 Iranian students in the United States. Throughout the 1970s, the number of Iranian students towered over the number of foreign students from any other country including Canada, China, and India. In 1975–76, Iranians made up more than 11 percent of the total foreign student population, in 1979–80, about 18 percent.

#### THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION AND ITS IMPACT

The 1970s was also a time of great political upheaval in Iran. Different groups agitated against the shah's government. Many Iranians became politicized through Marxist and anticolonial movements and disapproved of what they believed to be Iran's slavish emulation of the West. Jalal Al-e Ahmad powerfully articulated this sentiment in his 1962 essay, *Westoxification*, which was widely distributed among educated Iranians despite having been banned by the shah's regime. At the same time, Ali Shari'ati, who received his higher education in France, began to articulate a utopian, revolutionary vision of Islam that helped mobilize many younger Iranians during the revolution. Among Shi'a clerics, Ruhollah Khomeini's writings and lectures reformed traditional understandings of the political role of religious scholars in Shi'ism through the concept of *vilayat-e faqih* (guardianship of jurists), which became the organizing principle for the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to this concept, those who are most learned religiously are the most qualified in God's eye to rule.

Iranian youth, particularly university students, played a major role in opposing the shah's regime. Participation in demonstrations was a rite of passage for such students in Iran during the 1970s. As the shah began to clamp down on the opposition through the use of force, more Iranian students traveled abroad to study. There they organized in opposition to the shah's regime. They met and formed intellectual relations with other foreign students of Muslim-majority and colonized countries. Iranian students and activists in the United States regularly demonstrated against the shah's regime at venues involving the shah or any member of the royal family. Alongside these activist students, there were of

course other Iranian students who were either apolitical or supported the shah. Regardless of a student's political stance regarding the shah, a degree from a U.S. university was a ticket to a prestigious career in Iran.

The revolution had a broad base of supporters that included liberal and conservative Muslim reformers, Communists, and secular social democrats. Soon after Khomeini came into power, however, he consolidated his position by jailing or executing many activist members of non-Islamist groups. He instituted strict rules regarding dress and public behavior. These policies led many secular and liberal Muslims along with non-Muslim Iranians to emigrate. The devastating war between Iran and Iraq (1980–88) also pushed many Iranians out of the country. These events led to the largest wave of Iranian immigration to the United States. In the 1980s, 98,141 became permanent residents of the United States compared with 47,567 Iranians who became permanent residents during the prior six decades. Another 76,899 became permanent residents between 1990 and 1999, and 72,479 between 2000 and 2007. At the 2000 census, 338,266 Americans self-identified as being of Iranian ancestry.

Because so many Iranian Americans are recent immigrants, the vast majority of them—283,225, or 84 percent, according to the 2000 census—were born in Iran. Most of these Iranian-born Americans, or 55.9 percent, live in California, and most of them in the Los Angeles area. The states with the next-largest populations of Iranian-born Americans are New York and Texas, followed by Illinois, Massachusetts, and Washington.

Ironically, Iranians immigrated to the United States in large numbers during the same time that U.S.-Iranian relations were rapidly deteriorating. The revolution was in part against the shah's acquiescence to U.S. geopolitical, economic, and cultural interests in Iran, which dated back to the coup against Mossadeq. So when six months after the overthrow of the shah's regime the U.S. government under President Jimmy Carter allowed the shah to enter the United States for medical treatment, some revolutionaries, fearing that the United States might stage another comeback of the shah, reacted swiftly and angrily.

On November 4, 1979, a group of Iranian students seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran and held 52 of its American personnel hostage for 444 days. The United States responded by breaking diplomatic ties with new Iranian government, while resorting to sanctions and covert rescue operations to free its citizens. In the absence of a U.S. embassy in Iran, Iranians who wanted to immigrate to the United States had to undertake the extra expense of traveling outside of Iran to obtain a visa.

The new reality of U.S.-Iranian relations coupled with U.S. policies that favored the immigration of professionals and investors assured that the most educated, secular, and

affluent of Iranians migrated to the United States. It also caused a major brain drain in Iran, as many highly trained professionals and technocrats left the country. According to the 2000 census, in 1999, more than 50 percent of 250,785 Iranian Americans over the age of 25 had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 24.4 percent of all Americans, and the median household income of Iranian Americans was \$55,716, compared with the national median of \$41,994.

During the hostage crisis (1979–81), intelligence agencies targeted Iranian foreign students as a potential threat to U.S. security, and ever since the crisis, the average American has come to associate Iran with Muslim fanaticism and violent anti-Americanism. The majority of Iranian Americans, however, though proud of their cultural heritage, do not agree with the policies of the Iranian government. Many consider themselves to be in self-exile. They seek to disassociate Iranian culture and customs from the activities of Iran's Islamic government in particular and Islam more generally.

#### IRANIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM LIFE

While Iranian-American Jews, Zoroastrians, Baha'is, and Christians have founded self-help organizations based on their religious identities, there have been few Iranian-American Muslim organizations. Although we do not know the exact number of Iranian Americans who consider themselves Muslims, scholars of the Iranian-American community agree that most Iranian-American Muslims are secular or do not practice their religion regularly. Observant Iranian-American Muslims generally participate in Shi'a organizations and mosques that are predominantly non-Iranian. Alternatively, some practice in private or within informal gatherings. It is, for example, very common in cities with a even a modest number of Iranian Americans for there to be organized, public celebrations of the Iranian New Year, *nowruz*, but no public mention of Islamic holidays within the community.

In fact, not until December 2002, when approximately 500 Iranian men were arrested after voluntarily registering themselves with the Immigration and Naturalization Services, did Iranian-American activists formally associate with national Muslim public advocacy groups such as the MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL to fight against discriminatory practices against Muslims and other Middle Easterners.

Two noteworthy exceptions to the general lack of organized Iranian-American Muslim activity are the Alavi Foundation and the Muslim Students Association—Persian-Speaking Group (MSA-PSG), both of which have had informal ties with the Iranian government. The Alavi Foundation was formed after the revolution out of the Pahlavi Foundation, which the shah had founded as a nonprofit organization in New York City in 1973 to promote Iranian culture and interests in the United States. After the revolution, it came to be known



as the Mostazafan Foundation of New York (“the foundation of the oppressed”) and promoted the Iranian revolution’s ideological goal of bettering the lot of the oppressed (*mustadifun fi al-ard* in the QUR’AN) through the spread of Islamic values and beliefs. During this period, it supported missionary activities among African Americans in such cities as Washington, D.C., LOS ANGELES, and New York. It changed its name to the Alavi Foundation in 1992 to disassociate itself from the Mostazafan Foundation in Iran. In recent years, the Alavi Foundation has provided grants in support of both Islamic education and Persian studies to various universities, mosques, and Islamic centers. It sponsors the Islamic Education Center in Maryland and in Houston, Texas.

The MSA-PSG emerged from the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA). Iran’s attempt to export its revolution to the rest of the Muslim world brought it into conflict with a number of Arab countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This strained relations between Sunnis and Shi’is within the MSA, which received funding from Saudi Arabia and other Muslim-majority countries. In 1979, Iranian students formed the MSA-PSG, which continues to function on a small scale on some college campuses and holds an annual convention involving Shi’a scholars from the United States and Iran.

*Kambiz GhaneaBassiri*

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### Iraq War

On March 20, 2003, U.S. forces crossed the northern border of Kuwait and entered Iraq—a largely Muslim nation—marking the beginning of the Iraq War and a subsequent occupation that has continued for more than seven years. Although controversial, President George W. Bush, along with members of his cabinet such as Secretary of State Colin Powell and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, justified

the invasion by arguing that the Iraqi government, headed by Ba’athist leader and dictator Saddam Hussein, violated various UN resolutions by developing weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). The Bush administration also suggested that the Iraqi government was in alliance with certain terrorist organizations, including al-Qaeda, the group thought to be responsible for the SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the U.S. Pentagon. Within two months of the invasion, U.S. forces had toppled the Iraqi government, and Hussein was later captured and executed. Iraq proved unstable, however, and U.S. forces remained in Iraq for the rest of Bush’s presidency. During the 2008 presidential campaign, candidate Barack Obama, who had opposed the war from its inception, vowed to end the war and withdraw most U.S. troops within 16 months.

### MUSLIM-AMERICAN REACTIONS

Attitudes toward the Iraq War—and more generally the war on terror—varied among U.S. citizens. While some remained staunch supporters of the war and occupation, a large percentage of the American public advocated either an immediate or a gradual withdrawal of U.S. forces. Among Muslim Americans, attitudes toward the war tended to be less variable. According to a 2007 report by the Pew Research Center, an overwhelming majority of Muslim Americans opposed the initial invasion of Iraq and continual occupation by U.S. forces. Many Muslim Americans also opposed the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban government and to capture Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda and alleged mastermind of the September 11, 2001, attacks. Although virtually all the Muslim Americans surveyed viewed Islamic extremism, suicide bombing, and terrorist organizations to be a violation of the principles of Islam, many indicated they were dissatisfied with U.S. efforts to fight terrorism and thwart future attacks. Most Muslim Americans agreed that the tactics of the U.S. government directly violated basic human rights, endangered the lives of innocent civilians, and produced more terrorist activity than they prevented, citing abuses, for example, the detention facility at GUANTÁNAMO BAY, Cuba, where the United States detained enemy noncombatants.

While most Muslim Americans opposed the Iraq War from the very beginning and continued to be dismayed by the ongoing bloodshed and U.S. occupation, some—namely, those of Iraqi and Kurdish decent—responded favorably to the initial ouster of Saddam Hussein. Many celebrated enthusiastically the collapse of the totalitarian regime and welcomed what most saw as a new age of democratic reform. Nevertheless, as the war continued with little or no end in sight, many of these same Muslim Americans joined the rest of the Muslim community in expressing their disappointment with the continuing occupation.



The gravesite of Corporal Kareem Rashad Sultan Khan, who was killed in 2007 during the Iraq War and later buried in Arlington National Cemetery. On October 19, 2008, Khan was eulogized on NBC's *Meet the Press* by former secretary of state Colin Powell, who cited Khan's service as an example of the patriotism of Muslim Americans. (*Newscom*)

#### MUSLIM-AMERICAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

For many Muslim Americans, political organizations have become a popular outlet to voice frustrations and lobby for changes in policy. Groups such as the MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY (MAS), United Muslims of America, MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL (MPAC), and ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA have worked to mobilize the Muslim-American community and encourage participation in the political process. More specifically, these organizations have urged Muslim Americans to vote in local and national elections, participate in peaceful protests, and champion the cause of civil and human rights.

For many of these political organizations, the war in Iraq has been a sensitive issue. For example, in winter 2003, on the eve the Iraq War, the Muslim American Society issued

an official statement condemning the use of military action, declaring that an invasion could not be justified based on the evidence presented by the Bush administration. Accordingly, the statement urged the U.S. government to avoid armed conflict and to resolve the issue of WMDs through diplomatic negotiations.

Like the MAS, the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) also issued an official statement in December 2002, calling for the Bush administration to delay military action in favor of ongoing UN inspections of Iraqi weapons. The MPAC claimed that armed conflict would only worsen the situation by fueling Islamic extremism and making the region more unstable. In addition to producing official statements that challenged the justification of a U.S.-led invasion, groups such as MAS and MPAC expressed their opposition to the Iraq War in the 2004

and 2008 presidential elections by overwhelmingly supporting Democratic candidates John Kerry and Barack Obama, who promised voters a quick end to the conflict. In short, these political organizations provided the Muslim-American community with a viable political platform for voicing their dissatisfaction with the war in Iraq and other aspects of U.S. FOREIGN RELATIONS that clashed with their faith and values.

#### MUSLIM AMERICANS AND THE U.S. MILITARY

While most Muslim Americans opposed the Iraq War, this opposition did not prevent many young Muslims from joining the armed forces and serving on the front lines of the war. According to 2008 statistics from the Department of Defense, 3,700 military personnel, including five Muslim chaplains, claimed Islam as their faith. Unlike the vast majority of Muslim-American civilians who opposed the war from the outset, most Muslim-American soldiers viewed their service both in Iraq and in Afghanistan in more constructive terms. They saw themselves as following the teachings of the QUR'AN by working to establish peace, order, and justice in a region

mired in disunity and instability. Though many wrestled with the idea of fighting and even killing fellow Muslims, most Muslim-American soldiers argued that they were promoting principles central to Islam and were proud of their service.

The Iraq War generated much criticism from Muslim Americans. A number of political organizations worked hard to mobilize the Muslim-American community against the war through official statements, protests, and participation in the electoral process. Although some young Muslims bravely served in the U.S. MILITARY and fought in both Iraq and Afghanistan, most Muslims belonged to an ever-increasing majority of American citizens who openly opposed the Iraq War.

Jonathan W. Olson

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U.S. Department of State employee Angela Williams (*left*) meets with an Iraqi translator in Baghdad's Green Zone, or "safe zone," during the Iraq War. Williams was seeking to help the translator gain political asylum in the United States. (Hannah Allam/MCT/Landov)



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## Ishmaelites

The “Tribe of Ishmael” was a seminomadic, multiracial group that had migrated to the “Old Northwest”—today’s Indiana and Illinois—in the early 19th century from Kentucky. Some Ishmaelites avoided alcohol, shunned churches, intermarried with Shawnee Indians, had multiple sexual partners, and yearly journeyed on an unusual triangular migration route. Though the community no longer exists in an organized form, its apparently unique set of customs and multiracial character provided the possibility for understanding the group—though this understanding would later prove false—as a missing piece in the history of American Muslims.

The settled community that grew up around the Ishmaelites’ winter quarters on the White River, the site of the future Indianapolis, increasingly regarded the Ishmaelites as dangerous paupers and vagabonds who chose to recycle trash rather than take jobs in factories and or perform other wage labor. The settled communities’ fears were voiced by a eugenicist, the Reverend Oscar C. McCulloch, in an 1888 speech to the Conferences of Charities and Corrections. After comparing the Ishmaelites to parasitic crustaceans, the Sacculina, he concluded that the community should begin by cutting the Ishmaelites off from poor relief. Eugenics was a pseudoscientific attempt at so-called racial hygiene, the belief that undesirable characteristics could be bred out of the human species. This involved both the forced removal of

children from their homes and sterilization to prevent people from reproducing. The eugenics policies of McCulloch and the state of Indiana led to the dispersal of the Tribe of Ishmael by the beginning of the 20th century.

In the 1970s, the scholar Hugo P. Leaming reevaluated the history of the Tribe of Ishmael from a noneugenics perspective in his Ph.D. thesis. Instead of understanding the Ishmaelites as a group of inbred social degenerates, Leaming viewed them as a unique cultural entity with its own history, identity, and worldview. Leaming also suggested controversially that the Ishmaelites could have been an “older branch of [the] tree of African-American Islam.” This assertion was based on an examination of the Ishmaelites’ customs, as well as on the oral testimony of several 20th-century African-American Muslims recalling folk memories of the tribe.

Leaming suggested that the most direct Islamic link for the Ishmaelites would have been the possible presence of Islamicized West African Fulani tribesmen. The Tribe of Ishmael’s migration from the Carolinas and Tennessee through Kentucky to Indiana from 1785 to 1819 coincided with the aftermath of the American Revolution, in which many slaves had managed to escape westward, out of the South. This also overlapped with the Shawnees’ flight westward out of Kentucky in 1795 following their defeat at the hands of the newly independent United States. According to Leaming’s research, the former slaves intermingled with the fleeing Shawnee and eventually with “poor white” itinerants from the British Isles. This three-part mixture would make up the Ishmaelites.

The African connection, however, was not necessarily Fulani or Islamic. Leaming’s hypothesis rested on the idea that the Ishmaelites practiced polygamy, or having multiple spouses at once, and Leaming’s thesis, published in 1977, stated that this was also “a custom held by Islamic communities of the Old World”—a contention that is only partly true. But what Leaming called “polygamy” was in several cases simply marital infidelity, sex out of wedlock, or even prostitution—a profession on which some poor women relied for economic survival. In addition, polygamy is not exclusively Islamic by any measure. Not only was polygamy clearly an Old Testament practice, it was also a hotly debated topic of mid-19th-century America. Books such as *The Hebrew Wife* (1836) and the newly formed Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormons, all advocated plural marriages as part of their Christian teachings. In the 1830s, the Mormons settled around the Ishmaelites in the Old Northwest territory. They not only secretly asserted their “biblical right” to polygamy, but, like the Ishmaelites, permitted intermarriage with Native Americans. The Shawnee, a nation of Native Americans, also practiced polygamy.

But not all Ishmaelites had multiple sexual partners. In fact, Leaming suppressed or simply ignored evidence that



some Ishmaelites were committed monogamists, remaining married to the same spouse until death. Leaming's claim that Ishmaelites avoided alcohol was also partly inaccurate. Some members of the Ishmael family were alcoholics, others were occasional drinkers, and some avoided alcohol. Those Ishmaelites who avoided liquor were not Muslims, but generally Christians who, like many Methodists and other Protestants at that time, believed in temperance. It was far more likely that the Ishmaelite prohibition on liquor was derived from the Methodists, whose camp meetings Ishmaelites had attended in the 1830s, than from Muslims. In sum, the Ishmaelites' partial observance of temperance and "polygamy" were likely the products of Protestant or Native American influence rather than the retention of African-Muslim customs.

Ishmaelites' "nomadism" was their most distinctive practice, though today one might simply call it travel. The Shawnee, the Fulani, whites from Appalachia and the Upland South, and the Travellers, the non-Romany Gypsies of the British and Irish Isles, all had migratory characteristics. Leaming speculated it could have been the Fulani that provided this nomadic trait. Yet even Leaming regarded this as less likely when compared with the possible presence of Travellers in the group, for whom nomadism was also a distinctive trait. Travellers, in fact, shared many traits with the Ishmaelites from the value of self-employment, a tradition of begging, and clan-based organization. Above all, the annual migrations of the Ishmaelites are perhaps best explained by their desire to visit extended family and thus renew their kinship ties to one another. Three curious town names lie more or less along the triangular route the Ishmaelites followed on their annual migration. Morocco, Indiana, lies just south of the Kankakee River at the apex of the triangle. Mahomet, Illinois, and Indianapolis form the points for the base, with Mecca, Indiana, lying halfway along the baseline. Leaming acknowledges that American settlers seemed to have favored exotic, oriental names for their new towns. And these towns simply lie near the points of migration. Despite their names, the locations seemed to have provided purposes other than the religious: The Kankakee region was where the Native Americans with whom the Ishmaelites associated resided, at least at the beginning of the 1800s. Passing by Mahomet, Illinois, the Ishmaelites would have been conveniently between the urban centers of Champaign-Urbana and Decatur, Illinois, a perfect stop to apply the many trades of the Ishmaelites. In addition, the route apparently was not always fixed. There is no evidence that the Ishmaelites named the towns.

Several African Americans connected with Muslim groups in the 20th century recalled the history of the Ishmaelites. A member of the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE OF America (MST) interviewed in Leaming's thesis, for example,

recalled in 1930 that he had met a woman named Gallivant who joined the MST around 1920 in Detroit and identified as an Ishmaelite. She believed Ishmaelites had helped to found the MST, an African-American Islamic group established in the 1920s. This was possible, since some Ishmaelites were African Americans, and they may have made their way to Chicago and Detroit, where they might have joined thriving AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM groups. Such groups might have offered the disempowered Ishmaelites many of the traits they had so prized for well over a century: self-determination, self-definition, and pride as a group. But many of the Ishmaelites might have simply chosen to pass for white in majority society.

The Ishmaelites were a unique early American group. Some of them met with a tragic and violent ending through forced sterilization and the removal of their children. Others moved away from Indianapolis, sought working-class employment that paid hourly wages, or joined the middle class. Resurrecting the story of the "Tribe of Ishmael" is an important feat for the historian. But the conclusion that the Ishmaelites were Muslims is inadequate when weighed against plentiful evidence to account otherwise for their many anomalies.

Bruce Burnside

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#### Oscar McCulloch

##### "The Tribe of Ishmael" (1888)

Scholar Hugo Leaming's claim in the 1970s that the "Tribe of Ishmael" was an early and indigenous community of Muslim Americans rests on several incorrect assumptions, including the idea that this community traced its roots back to Muslim Africans. Careful studies of the Ishmaelites' family tree have shown that although there was an important presence of black and Indian Americans in the group, it was overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon. Most "Ishmaelites" were whites from the Upland South, especially Kentucky. They did not call themselves a "tribe," and many of them

*had no family ties to the actual Ishmael family. In fact, it was an outsider who first identified this generally poor class of whites as the "Tribe of Ishmael." Congregationalist minister Oscar McCulloch, a leading advocate of welfare reform in the late 19th century, coined the term to describe the presence of what today would be called the socioeconomic "underclass" of Indianapolis. McCulloch saw this class of people as a danger to society because they refused to take wage labor jobs and to abide by middle-class norms of sexual propriety. Calling them the "Tribe of Ishmael" helped him make these people seem more exotic and foreign. Using the term tribe in his time was a kind of epithet that he hurled at white people whose culture he pitied, as the account of the Ishmaelites below makes clear. Presented at the 1888 National Conference of Charities and Correction, this study in "social degeneration" would be cited in the first half of the 20th century to justify the exclusion of immigrants with "bad genes" and the forced sterilization of thousands of poor men and women.*



The central family—that which gives its name to the tribe of Ishmael—first appears in Indianapolis about 1840. The original family stem, of which we have scant records as far back as 1790, is then in Kentucky, having come from Maryland, through Pennsylvania. Ben Ishmael had eight children—five sons and three daughters. Some of the descendants are now living in Kentucky, and are prosperous, well-regarded citizens. One son named John married a half-breed woman, and came into Marion County, Indiana, about 1840. He was diseased, and could go no further. He had seven children, of whom two were left in Kentucky, one is lost sight of, and one remained unmarried. The remaining three sons married three sisters from a pauper family named Smith. These had children, of whom fourteen lived; and thirteen raised families, having sixty children, of whom thirty are now living in the fifth generation.

Since 1840, this family has had a pauper record. They have been in the almshouse, the House of Refuge, the woman's reformatory, the penitentiaries, and have received continuous aid from the township. They are intermarried with the other members of this group, as you may see by the marriage lines, and with over two hundred other families. In this family history are murders, a large number of illegitimacies and of prostitutes. They are generally diseased. The children die young. They live by petty stealing, begging, ash-gathering. In summer they "gypsy," or travel in wagons east or west. We hear of them in Illinois

about Decatur, and in Ohio about Columbus. In the fall they return. They have been known to live in hollow trees on the river-bottoms or in empty houses. Strangely enough they are not intemperate to excess.

In this sketch, three things will be evident: First, the wandering blood from the half-breed mother, in the second generation the poison and passion that probably came with her. Second, the licentiousness which characterizes all the men and women, and the diseased and physically weakened condition. From this result mental weakness, general incapacity, and unfitness for hard work. And, third, this condition is met by the benevolent public with almost unlimited public and private aid, thus encouraging them in this idle, wandering life, and in the propagation of similarly disposed children.

A second typical case is that of the Owens family, also from Kentucky. There were originally four children, of whom two have been traced, William and Brook. William had three children, who raised pauper families.

One son of the third generation died in the penitentiary; his two sons in the fourth generation have been in the penitentiary; a daughter in the fourth generation was a prostitute, with two illegitimate children. Another son of the third generation had a penitentiary record, and died of the delirium tremens and went to the medical college. There have been several murders; a continuous pauper and criminal record. An illegitimate half-breed Canadian woman enters this family. There is much prostitution, but little intemperance.

Brook had a son John, who was a Presbyterian minister. He raised a family of fourteen illegitimate children. Ten of these came to Indiana, and their pauper record begins about 1850. Of the ten, three raised illegitimate families in the fourth generation; and, of these, two daughters and a son have illegitimate children in the fifth generation. . . .

We know of one hundred and twenty-one prostitutes. The criminal record is very large—petty thieving, larcenies chiefly. There have been a number of murders. The first murder committed in the city was in this family. A long and celebrated murder case, known as the "Clem" murder, costing the state immense amounts of money, is located here. . . .

The number of illegitimacies is very great. The Board of Health reports that an estimate of

still-born children found in sinks, etc., would not be less than six per week. Deaths are frequent, and chiefly among children. The suffering of the children must be great. The people have no occupation. They gather swill or ashes; the women beg, and send the children around to beg; they make their eyes sore with vitriol. In my own experience, I have seen three generations of beggars among them. I have not time here to go in to details, some loathsome, all pitiful. I was with a great-grandmother on her deathbed. She had been taken sick on the annual gypsying; deserted at a little town because sick; shipped into the city; sent to the county asylum; at last brought to the miserable home to die. One evening I was called to marry a couple. I found them in one small room, with two beds. In all, eleven people lived in it. The bride was dressing, the groom washing. Another member of the family filled a coal-lamp while burning. The groom offered to haul ashes for the fee. I made a present to the bride. Soon after, I asked one of the family how they were getting on. "Oh, Elisha don't live with her any more." "Why?" "Her other husband came back, and she went to him. That made Elisha mad, and he left her." Elisha died in the pest-house. A mother and two girls, present that night were killed by the cars.

All these are grim facts; but they are facts, and can be verified.



Source: McCulloch, Oscar C. *The Tribe of Ishmael: A Study in Social Degradation*. Indianapolis: Charity Organization Society, 1888, 2–6.

### **Islamic calendar**

The Islamic calendar, also called the Hijra calendar, is composed of 12 lunar months, each of which lasts from one sighting of the crescent moon to the next. The 12 months of the Hijra calendar are Muharram, Safar, Rabi' al-Awwal, Rabi' al-Thani, Jumada al-Ula, Jumada al-Akhira, Rajab, Sha'ban, Ramadan, Shawwal, Dhu al-Qa'dah, and Dhu al-Hijja. Because it follows a strictly lunar cycle, the Islamic calendar is approximately 354 days long, with each month beginning 10 or 11 days earlier each year in relation to the 365-day solar year. Thus, the 12 months of the Hijra calendar are not comparable to the 12 months of the Gregorian calendar. For example, the first day of the month of Ramadan in the Hijra year 1000 was June 10, 1592. The first day of the month of Ramadan in the Hijra year 1420 was December

8, 1999. To give another example, the Gregorian year 2011 spans two Hijra years: 1432 and 1433. The Muslim calendar may also vary from place to place, depending on when Muslim authorities and others see the crescent moon.

While solar calendars, including the Gregorian, are used in the Muslim world for a variety of purposes, the Hijra calendar is used for determining the important ritual fasts and festivals of the Islamic year. "Year One" of the Islamic calendar is 622 C.E., designated as 1 A.H. (after Hijrah). This is the year of the emigration, or Hijra, of the prophet MUHAMMAD and his followers from the city of Mecca to Medina.

The Islamic calendar maintains a seven-day week. As in the Jewish calendar, the days run from sunset to sunset, rather than sunrise to sunrise. In many Muslim-majority countries, businesses close on Friday afternoons, since Friday is the day for congregational prayers. Thursday is also an important day of fasting for many Muslims. In Shi'a communities, special religious assemblies, *majlis*, are regularly held on Thursday evenings.

### **THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR IN THE UNITED STATES**

Not all Muslim Americans have used the Islamic calendar. The NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), led by ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) from the 1930s until his death in 1975, used the Gregorian calendar instead, celebrating the month of Ramadan each December as a Muslim substitute for Christmas. Certain other holidays that were particular to the Nation of Islam were also observed according to the solar calendar. For example, SAVIOUR'S DAY, which was held in honor of NOI founder W. D. FARD, took place every year on February 26. After inheriting the leadership of the movement from his father in 1975, W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008) changed this policy and asked his followers to observe Ramadan during the designated lunar month. Though LOUIS FARRAKHAN (1933– ), who re-created a version of the Nation of Islam in 1978, reinstituted the celebration of Ramadan in December, he, too, changed the policy and in 1997 directed that his followers observe Ramadan according to the Islamic calendar.

As the Islamic calendar became increasingly popular during the religious REVIVALISM of the late 20th century, it presented a series of challenges for Muslim Americans. American businesses, schools, and government offices operate according to the Gregorian calendar, and Muslim religious HOLIDAYS have generally gone unrecognized by both business and government. Part of the problem is that, unlike Christian and secular holidays that take place each year at the same or nearly the same time on the Gregorian calendar, Muslim religious holidays occur at different times each year—generally speaking, 11 days earlier than the year before. There is no Muslim equivalent of the Jewish Hanukkah, which takes place yearly in proximity to Christmas, that

allows for Muslim participation in the shared holiday season that so dominates American culture every December. There is no regular repeatable Ramadan or Hajj season, as each varies from year to year.

In addition, Muslim Americans themselves have often disagreed about when to celebrate their major holidays. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, various Muslim-American leaders have disagreed with one concerning the use of moon sighting for determining the lunar calendar, especially in establishing the dates for the beginning of Ramadan, the month of dawn-to-sunset fasting. Because moon sighting may vary from place to place, different communities have begun and ended the Ramadan fast at different times. In 1993, for example, the Islamic Center of Southern California and the Garden Grove Mosque, both located in greater Los Angeles, chose to observe Eid al-Fitr, the festival celebrating the end of the month of Ramadan, on different days.

In 2006, the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA, the Muslim-American coalition of mosques, advocated following the recommendations of the FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA (FCNA) concerning the days on which to begin and end the month of Ramadan. Instead of attempting to sight the moon with one's eyes, FCNA advised Muslims to follow a mathematical formula for predicting the appearance of the new moon. This religious ruling proved extremely controversial, however, and many Muslim communities refused to follow it, relying instead on the official pronouncement of religious authorities in Saudi Arabia or other countries—all widely available on the INTERNET and through satellite television. In 2007, FCNA modified its position and aligned itself with a decision made by the European Council for Fatwa and Research to use a slightly different series of mathematical parameters used for administrative purposes in Saudi Arabia. Still, Muslim-American groups could not settle on one system, and the observance of the holidays varied from community to community.

Vernon James Schubel

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#### **Islamic Center of Washington, D.C.**

The desire to build a mosque in Washington, D.C., was perhaps first expressed by Egyptian ambassador Mahmood Hassan Pasha in November 1944. The Washington Mosque Foundation was formed shortly thereafter to support funding for the building. Within a year, membership in the foundation included representatives from nearly every Muslim-majority nation in the world. The foundation purchased a site on Embassy Row at 2551 Massachusetts Avenue

by April 30, 1946, and the cornerstone of the center was laid on January 11, 1949.

Construction began quickly due to strong international support. Italian architect Mario Russi designed the building, and construction supplies were donated by several Muslim-majority countries. Tiles were sent by Turkey, and the carpets for the mosque were contributed by Iran. Egypt supplied a chandelier and artists who added verses from the QUR'AN to the walls and ceiling of the mosque. The center was finished in eight years, and its dedication ceremony occurred on June 28, 1957. Several notable figures were present, including President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., has been in continuous operation since then.

The structural design of the Islamic Center is notable for its symbolism. The ARABIC inscription across the top of the mosque, taken from Qur'an 21: 20, translates as follows: "In houses of worship which Allah has permitted to be raised so that His name be remembered, there [are such who] extol His limitless glory at morning and evening." The architectural style is Mamluk Egyptian; it makes the building stand out on Embassy Row.

Each section of the mosque contains elements of different Islamic cultures' architectural methods. The mihrab, an architectural feature in mosques that points toward MECCA, utilizes Ottoman Turkish aesthetics. The interior of the mosque is decorated with verses organized in a number of symmetrical patterns. The inclusion of elements from numerous Islamic cultures made the center an unusually multicultural architectural endeavor.

The center has played an important role in the history of Muslim Americans. Although there are older mosques in the United States, the Islamic Center of Washington was one of the first mosques built in a major city to attract national and international media coverage. Its board of directors has been comprised of ambassadors from historically Islamic countries, and they have stressed that the building is a powerful symbol of Muslim unity.

In addition, the center is an important symbol of Islamic-American cooperation. Six days after the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, for example, President George W. Bush gave a speech at the center differentiating between Muslim extremists and the religion of Islam. "The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam," he said, flanked by various Muslim-American leaders. "Islam is peace." On June 27, 2007, the building's 50th anniversary, President Bush rededicated the Islamic Center of Washington and announced the appointment of a U.S. envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Sada Cumber, whose term began on March 3, 2008, was appointed to encourage mutual acceptance and discourse between the United States and Muslim communities.

Kim Dieser





The Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., located on Embassy Row and dedicated in 1957 by President Eisenhower, combines Ottoman Turkish, Egyptian Mamluk, and other traditional architectural forms from the Islamic world. (*Library of Congress*)

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### Islamic Circle of North America

Established in the early 1970s in New York City by SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) has grown to include eight regional and local

offices in the south-central United States, southeastern United States, Southern California, central New Jersey, Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York. Its leadership structure includes an amir (or leader), a secretary-general, an executive committee, and a consultation committee. In addition to its main branch, it has a Sister's Wing, created in 1979, and a children's group. By the beginning of the 21st century, more than 10,000 persons attended its annual conventions, held jointly with the MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY, and thousands of Muslim Americans participated in one of its activities—joining a study circle, contributing to its related charities, or volunteering to proselytize on behalf of Islam. While the organization and its activities have expanded, its purpose has remained constant since its initial founding during the era of Muslim-American religious REVIVALISM; according to its own statement of purpose, the goal of ICNA is "to seek the pleasure of Allah . . . through the struggle of Iqamat-ud-Deen (establishment of

the Islamic system of life) as spelled out in the QUR'AN and the Sunnah [tradition] of the Prophet MUHAMMAD."

One of the major activities of ICNA is its engagement in missionary work to convert people to Islam. Since the 1970s, ICNA has distributed pamphlets about Islam in various public spaces. In 2008, ICNA's "Why Islam?" campaign has used advertisements on subways, buses, and billboards to encourage non-Muslims to learn more about Islam. In Houston, Texas, for example, one ICNA billboard near Interstate 45 asked passers-by whether they were confused about the "purpose of life." The billboard gave a Web address and a toll-free number one could call for more information. According to ICNA, the organization fielded more than 1,000 inquiries per month.

ICNA's New York City-based subway campaign posted advertisements in 1,000 of the city's 6,000 trains and included simple questions about the head scarf, polygamy, and other issues of common concern. In July 2008, the *New York Post* criticized the campaign with a headline warning about what it called "Jihad Train," though New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg reminded fellow New Yorkers that such religious speech was protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

ICNA has also sought to use a variety of MEDIA to encourage its members and other Muslim Americans to live each aspect of their personal and professional lives in accordance with its socially conservative interpretation of Islam. Its monthly *Message International* magazine, begun in 1989, has featured stories on the rising concerns about DATING among Muslim-American YOUTH, controversies about the ISLAMIC CALENDAR and the timing of Muslim HOLIDAYS, and the rising trend of purchasing a home or saving for retirement by using the techniques of ISLAMIC FINANCE. ICNA's audio and visual department, Sound Vision, has developed a list of more than 1,500 audio tapes, DVDs, and computer programs geared toward the Muslim-American market. Representative samples have included the *Adam's World* series, sometimes called the Muslim *Sesame Street*; a "Great Mosque Board Game"; and a multimedia software series on how to recite the Qur'an.

In 1993, ICNA established ICNA Relief, a charitable organization whose focus has shifted over the past two decades from delivering aid overseas to PHILANTHROPY in the United States. Raising up to \$4 million per year in the 1990s, ICNA Relief generally contributed funds to various charities in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, the nations to which most of its members traced their roots. But the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, led to a change in its focus. As the U.S. Treasury Department and Federal Bureau of Investigation, suspicious of ties between Muslim Americans and Muslims abroad, increased its scrutiny of Muslim-American charities, ICNA Relief was one of several Muslim-American charities to devote more resources to domestic philanthropy.

In 2005, ICNA Relief joined the American Muslim Taskforce for Disaster Relief, which helped to aid victims of

Hurricane Katrina, and, in 2006, also aided victims of a massive earthquake in Pakistan. In addition to its disaster relief activities, ICNA Relief offered more than \$400,000 in legal assistance to 800 individuals who were detained, deported, or affected in other ways by federal law enforcement agencies' increased prosecution of Muslims and Arabs after 9/11. By 2010, ICNA Relief had also provided 5,000 people, both Muslims and non-Muslims, with temporary shelter, domestic violence counseling, and food vouchers.

Though ICNA has avoided direct political involvement—a requirement of its tax-exempt status as a federal 501(c)(3) organization—it has encouraged its individual members to become involved in U.S. POLITICS, INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS, and civic affairs. Accused by some anti-Muslim critics on the INTERNET of supporting terrorism, ICNA has responded, with all other major Muslim-American organizations, by unequivocally rejecting terrorist acts committed in the name of Islam. In 2003, the U.S. Senate Finance Committee investigated possible financial ties between ICNA and terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda, and in 2005, it issued a statement saying that there was no evidence of such ties and no cause for further investigation.

Despite these findings, the federal government continued to target Muslim Americans, including members of ICNA, for special scrutiny in its attempts to prevent future terrorist attacks. In 2009, ICNA joined other major Muslim-American organizations, including the AMERICAN MUSLIM ALLIANCE, COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS, MUSLIM ALLIANCE IN NORTH AMERICA, Muslim American Society, MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION, ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA, and MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL, in condemning government policies and FBI tactics used to investigate Muslim Americans. Their joint statement said that they remained committed to "being full partners in the defense, development, and prosperity of our homeland, the United States." But it also condemned what it deemed as the "infiltration of mosques" by federal agents; the "use of agents as agents provocateurs to trap unsuspecting Muslim youth" in sting operations; the "unfair targeting and deliberate vilification of CAIR [the Council on American-Islamic Relations]; and the "dissemination of Islamophobic analysis by federally funded fusion centers to local law enforcement."

By the beginning of the 21st century, ICNA, like most other major Muslim-American organizations, faced the challenge of defending its members against religious profiling, discrimination, and stereotypes. But it also encouraged its members to become more engaged with their non-Muslim neighbors, public service, and public affairs. It was a balancing act that produced organizational success for ICNA, which continued to grow despite various challenges after 9/11.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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### Islamic finance

Islamic finance—as opposed to Muslims involved in finance—is the practice of financial transactions in accordance with various interpretations of SHARI‘A, a Muslim code of LAW and ethics. Mortgages, mutual funds, and banking that fall under the umbrella of Islamic finance are known for their avoidance of *riba*, defined either as interest or usury. Investing in accordance with the principles of Islamic finance also means avoiding businesses that profit from alcohol, gambling, and the sale of pork, acting in an honest manner, and sharing in both the risks and the rewards of investment. Since the 1970s, a period defined by growing religious REVIVALISM among Muslim Americans, an increasing number of Muslim Americans have attempted to conduct their financial dealings in this manner, leading to the proliferation of new financial services and products and the rise of various authoritative bodies that informally regulate this section of the U.S. economy.

#### FINANCIAL PROFESSIONALS

Financial professionals in the United States who attempt to conduct business according to Islamic principles live in the tension between two worlds—the world of conventional banking and the world of Islamic financial law. If Islamic financial products become virtually identical to their conventional counterparts, promoters run the risk of appearing to be morally compromised in the eyes of Muslims who wish to invest their money or finance a home in religiously acceptable ways. On the other hand, if the financial products deviate too far from conventional banking and finance laws, they run the risk that financial industry regulators will reject or marginalize them, making them inaccessible to most Muslims. Islamic financial institutions must therefore be concerned with *both* Islamic legal requirements as well as state and industry regulation.

In the United States, the Islamic Finance Project at Harvard University, established in 1995, has been the recognized leader in the development of collaboration among scholars, students, and financial professionals from around the world. In 2002, the U.S. Treasury sponsored an Islamic Finance 101 Conference and in 2004 established an Islamic

Finance Scholar-in-Residence program designed to engage with key policy issues of concern to the Federal Reserve, the U.S. Congress, and other entities charged with regulating financial markets. The first scholar-in-residence was Dr. Mahmoud El-Gamal, chaired professor of Islamic economics, finance, and management, and professor of statistics and economics at Rice University in Houston, Texas.

#### MUTUAL FUNDS

Mutual funds are investments that pool the contributions of many different investors into one fund. Buying shares in a mutual fund reduces the individual investor's risk because each share in the fund is invested in several different assets. Mutual funds can invest in many different kinds of assets, including stocks and bonds. Some stock mutual funds purchase shares of companies in a certain region (like Asia), or a specific industry (like energy, health, or technology). A small number of self-defined "socially responsible" mutual funds refuse to invest in companies that damage the environment, market guns, or make cigarettes.

Muslim Americans and financial professionals who cater to them have been investing in mutual funds managed in accordance with Islamic principles since the 1980s. The most successful of these companies has been the Amana family of mutual funds, started in 1986. Operating out of Bellingham, Washington, and CHICAGO, Illinois, this company offered both the Amana Trust Growth fund and the Amana Trust Income fund, which had a combined value of more than \$1.2 billion in 2009.

In 1999, the Dow Jones Company established the Dow Jones Islamic Market Index (DJIMI) as a benchmark for the performance of companies that, according to a screening process devised by the Dow Jones Market Index Shari‘ah Supervisory Board, abide by the principles set forth in the shari‘a. Prohibited businesses, for example, include those involved in alcohol, tobacco, pork, conventional banking, weapons and defense, and many forms of entertainment. In addition, DJIMI determines whether a company is carrying too much debt or unacceptable levels of interest income. The international and independent Supervisory Board, which in 2009 included Muslim-American scholar Yusuf Talal DeLorenzo, reviews the composition of the index on a quarterly basis and makes recommendations to the DJIMI Steering Committee responsible for making final decisions. Individual investors can purchase shares in a mutual fund that holds various securities in the index or can purchase shares directly in the securities listed in the index.

#### HOME FINANCING

Most Muslim Americans finance the purchase of a home by using a conventional fixed-rate or variable-rate mortgage—and some Muslim scholars have advised them that



it is permissible to do so. A minority of Muslim Americans have sought to avoid paying interest and found alternatives to conventional financing. These alternatives have included the following financing options: buyers purchase the home at a higher-than-market price through a contract for deed, paying for it in installments over time; buyers rent to own the property, agreeing to a purchase the property after a period of paying rent; buyers partner with a financial institution in purchasing the home and use one of the models above to pay for the home over time.

One of the first Islamic mortgages in the United States was written by the American Finance House LARIBA in 1987 to finance a home purchase in Madison, Wisconsin. In 1998, the United Bank of Kuwait (UBK) briefly operated a mortgage company, providing loans to 60 households before closing down in 2000. Of longer-term significance was the regulatory change it triggered from the U.S. comptroller of the currency, stating that Islamic mortgage alternative products were equivalent to mortgages as far as banks were concerned. This new policy opened the door for the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (Freddie Mac) to invest \$1 million in American Finance House contracts in 2001, expanding to \$45 million by 2005. Likewise, in August 2001, Freddie Mac invested \$10 million to purchase lease contracts from Standard Federal Bank and United Mortgage of America in Detroit. The Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae) also agreed to purchase \$10 million of Islamic financing contracts in 2003. By 2007, Freddie Mac was reported to have purchased more than \$250 million in Islamic mortgages (or their functional alternatives).

The entrance of the U.S. government, via Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, into Islamic home financing was designed to help underserved communities purchase homes. Their involvement also encouraged new Islamic and conventional banks to expand their services to Muslim clients. Such activities illustrated the complexity of a burgeoning Islamic finance sector of the U.S. economy that required the participation and cooperation of the U.S. government and its regulatory agencies, Islamic financial institutions and Muslim scholars, and Muslim-American consumers.

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**Islamic holidays** See HOLIDAYS.

#### **Islamic Medical Association of North America**

Since it was founded in 1968, the Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA) has served as a professional society for more than 2,800 Muslim physicians and dentists in the United States and Canada. IMANA's mission calls for the association to promote awareness and understanding of Muslim medical practices and ethics within the Muslim communities of North America as well as in American society at large. IMANA's mission also includes relief work and other charitable goals. In keeping with the standards of other American professional associations, IMANA is a tax-exempt charitable organization. A board of regents oversees its operations, with daily management by an executive committee.

IMANA traces its origin to 1967, when a group of Muslim-American physicians formed the organization as a professional network of Muslim medical practitioners in the United States and Canada. Like several other American Muslim organizations, IMANA's founders, particularly Mobin Akhtar, Amjad Ali, and Bashir Zikria, initially met through the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA) and created IMANA as a subsection within the MSA. Nearly all of the founders and the subsequent first wave of leaders of the medical association were immigrants trained in overseas medical schools; they concerned themselves with creating a network to link themselves as newcomers to both America and the American medical system.

The first years of IMANA focused on the formation of the organization itself, including bylaws, legal incorporation as not-for-profit, and advertising the new group to Muslim medical professionals. In 1968, the association held its first convention in NEW YORK CITY. The convention followed the normal pattern of American professional associations and offered an opportunity for its members to present research and informally network with other Muslim physicians and dentists in the United States and Canada.

The history of IMANA reflects an organization that began as a small network of newcomers to American medicine, but it has been transformed into a well-established organization within the North American medical industry. This growth paralleled the broader rise of the organization's members from newcomers and young doctors to established leaders in the medical community. As it grew, the association widened its scope to look overseas. IMANA members helped create the



Federation of Islamic Medical Associations, an umbrella group for IMANA and other national or regional Muslim medical groups, in 1981. Beginning in 1990, IMANA has rotated its annual conferences to include international locations every second year. The history of IMANA reveals the maturation of an international Muslim medical network. It also reflects the desire by Muslim medical professionals to follow the patterns of other non-Muslim physicians and dentists through associating in a professional organization. Simultaneously, it indicates these health professionals' hopes to retain a unique identity as Muslim-American medical practitioners.

Like most other professional organizations, the main activities of IMANA have focused on education (including publications) and professional networking. Two publications, the scholarly periodical *Journal of the Islamic Medical Association* and the bimonthly *Islamic Medical Association Newsletter*, have served as means of networking Muslim medical professionals as well as professional tools. The peer-reviewed journal has allowed members to disseminate their research, which has often focused on Islamic medical ethics, history of Islamic medical practice, and current issues of interest to a wide population of medical professionals. IMANA has also distributed a number of short print and online publications on specific topics intended for a non-Muslim readership. These publications have included material intended to help non-Muslim medical professionals understand Islamic practices—for example, health issues that arise during the daily fasts of Ramadan—and policy statements on medical issues aimed at politicians or policy makers—for example, on stem-cell research. The *Islamic Medical Association Newsletter*, by contrast, has served as a networking tool for Muslim physicians, medical students, and other medical professionals.

In addition to these professional services and publications, all of which mirror those offered by other professional organizations in North America and internationally, IMANA has engaged in extensive charitable work. The association has promoted this work as part of its Muslim identity and has declared it central to the group's mission. The group sponsored free clinics in American cities with large Muslim populations; operated relief services in Palestine, Turkey, Bosnia, and Chechnya; and helped rebuild a Pakistani village damaged by the 2008 earthquake. Such charitable activities, most of which attempt to support fellow Muslims and the worldwide Muslim community, indicate the manner in which IMANA operates as both a professional association and a religious organization.

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### Islamic Party of North America

Also known as the Islamic Party, the Islamic Party of North America (IPNA) was a grassroots political and religious organization officially founded on December 31, 1971, when a group of predominately African-American Muslims from CHICAGO, NEW YORK CITY, and Pittsburgh met in WASHINGTON, D.C., to elect Yusuf Muzaffaruddin Hamid as their leader. IPNA's mission was to support the establishment of a community of Sunni Muslims in the United States dedicated to following Islamic tradition in every aspect of their lives—the political, the religious, and the social. An example of the religious REVIVALISM that became so central to American religions more generally in the 1970s, IPNA stressed the teachings of Islam that addressed poverty, hunger, and the maldistribution of wealth, often engaging in community activism dedicated to ameliorating these problems.

Throughout its history, IPNA was guided by the vision of its founder, Yusuf Muzaffaruddin Hamid (1944–91). A native of ATLANTA, Hamid was a jazz artist who arrived in New York City as a teenager, hoping to make a living as a musician. Becoming exposed to Islam through the many Muslim jazz artists in the city, including such figures as DAKOTA STATON (1930–2007), Hamid became a Sunni Muslim around 1962. Influenced partly by Daoud Ahmed Faisal (1891–1990), Hamid traveled to the Middle East and South Asia in the middle 1960s. In Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Pakistan, Hamid was exposed to and influenced by Muslim organizations such as the Muslim Brothers and Jamaati Islami, which preached that Islam was a complete way of life as relevant to public affairs as to private religiosity.

The early history of IPNA bore the influence of these movements. By 1969, Hamid returned to the United States and moved to Washington, D.C., where he attended prayers at the immigrant- and foreign-led ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C. Disappointed with the lack of attention the Islamic Center paid to the social, political, and cultural issues facing indigenous Muslims, especially African Americans, Hamid joined other black Sunni Muslims in an exodus from the center in 1968. He established Masjid al-

Ummah, or the Community Mosque, in 1969. This mosque became the national headquarters for IPNA in 1971.

From 1971 to 1974, the movement's headquarters was located at 101 S Street in Washington, though several IPNA activities were also run out of Chicago. Branches were also established in Pittsburgh, Akron, Houston, New York, DETROIT, and New Orleans. In 1974, the national headquarters of IPNA moved to a larger space, formerly occupied by a church, on the 700 block of Park Road in northwest Washington, D.C., near Howard University.

From that location, IPNA attempted to engage in the same kind of institution building that had made the NATION OF ISLAM so successful. Its initiatives included a monthly newspaper, *Al-Islam*, a bookstore and restaurant, a savings and loan, an elementary school, and job-placement services. Dozens of members were involved in the day-to-day operations of IPNA, and hundreds attended Friday congregational PRAYER. The national membership of the movement likely numbered in the hundreds.

IPNA's community activism in the mid-1970s reflected a change in the organizational philosophy of the movement's founder. In the early 1970s, Hamid stressed what he believed was the need for Muslims in the United States to separate from mainstream society in order to form a "sovereign" Muslim-American community governed by the SHARI'A, or Islamic LAW and ethics. Like members of Darul Islam, another African-American Sunni organization, Hamid's agenda was also deeply influenced by the ISLAMIC THOUGHT of the Islamist organizations about which he had learned while in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan. His rhetoric included the call for an Islamic revolution.

But by the middle 1970s, Hamid turned from separatism toward civic engagement, and his teachings sounded increasingly like the late social and political thought of MALCOLM X (1925–65). The organizational activities of IPNA enacted this philosophical shift not only by establishing businesses and media outlets but also by creating a Department of Oppressed People's Affairs. In 1975, the Community Mosque hosted several interfaith, community-based events, including a seminar on hunger, and became a regular meeting place for Black Men against Rape and the United Black Community.

The change in philosophy was also reflected in the way that IPNA adapted the organizational structures and religious disciplines of the Muslims Brothers, and especially Jamaati Islami, to suit its new emphasis on community activism and personal piety. Male members of IPNA even wore Pakistani-style DRESS, including a long green shirt, black pants, and black kufis, or skullcaps. Organized into small groups sometimes called families or cells, IPNA members were required to attend morning prayers at the mosque and the study circles that followed them. At least two times a week, they were

required to perform missionary work, talking to strangers about Islam.

In 1975, Hamid decided to dissolve the individual chapters of IPNA, calling for all members to make *hijra*, or emigration, to the Washington area. In 1977, he then directed the community to move to the small town of Conley, Georgia. That year IPNA also began expanding its organization to the Caribbean and eventually Central America. Though most members refused to go along with the move, Hamid decided in 1979 to move the organizational headquarters to Trinidad. He liquidated all IPNA assets, and only a small group followed him first to Trinidad, then to Guyana and Dominica. By 1981, IPNA effectively ceased to exist.

Its members went on to join a variety of other Muslim groups in the 1980s. Some of them became Shi'a Muslims. Hamid continued to dream of establishing a self-sustaining community of Muslims led by the Qur'an and the traditions of the prophet Muhammad, but he became ill in the late 1980s and died on September 15, 1991.

For many of Hamid's associates and followers, the IPNA of the 1970s would remain a powerful memory of a Muslim community completely devoted to a comprehensive lifestyle that was politically, spiritually, and economically revolutionary.

See also AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS.

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### Islamic schools

The education of Muslim children has been of central significance for the development of a Muslim identity and the perpetuation of the Islamic tradition in America from before the time of the slave trade. Beginning with the 20th century, the mostly informal nature of instruction through parents and learned individuals gave way to more formal educational structures, such as study circles at mosques or Islamic centers, weekend schools, after-school programs, as well as full-time Islamic schools. The history of Islamic schools in the United States reflects the community's desire to prepare children academically and to strengthen their commitment to Islam under often adverse circumstances.

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SCHOOLS

With the creation of independent Muslim communities among African Americans in the early decades of the 20th century, efforts came under way to create schools independent of the public education system, which many Muslim Americans perceived as an instrument that upheld the inferior status of African Americans. Among the organizations that championed the development of separate schools for AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, none was of greater significance than the NATION OF ISLAM, whose call for educational independence was consistent with its stress on political, eco-

nomic, and cultural self-determination. In the early 1930s, the Nation of Islam began to establish Islamic schools under the banner of the University of Islam. Although they were not actual universities but elementary and secondary schools, the name indicated the universal and advanced nature of the instruction that placed African-American history and experience at the center. Under ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, who had assumed leadership in 1934, the Nation of Islam continued to prioritize education. At his death in 1975, the Nation of Islam boasted a nationwide network of more than 40 schools that functioned independently of the public school system.



University of Islam, 1962. Established in the early 1930s by the Nation of Islam, the University of Islam became a nationwide Muslim parochial school system in the 1960s. These fifth and sixth graders were among the several generations that have now graduated from these schools. (Bettmann/CORBIS)



The ideological reorientation under W. D. MOHAMMED, who steered the Nation of Islam toward Sunni orthodoxy, also affected the schools within its network. They were renamed Sister CLARA MUHAMMAD Schools and began teaching a curriculum that stressed the major Islamic tenets based on the QUR'AN and Sunna, or the traditions of the Prophet. As a result of organizational decentralization that gave local communities greater authority, the Sister Clara Muhammad Schools were affected adversely by leadership struggles within their communities. Their number declined in the 1980s and dropped below 30 a decade after that. The 1990s, however, also saw renewed energies to enhance the profile of the schools and their staff through the work of the newly established Muslim Teachers College, initially in Richmond and then in Randolph, Virginia, that sponsored in-service training and teaching workshops. Similarly, efforts were made to standardize the curriculum, although administrative decisions continued to remain with each local school.

#### MUSLIM IMMIGRANT SCHOOLS

Since their reconstitution after 1975, the Sister Clara Muhammad Schools had opened their doors to students outside the African-American Muslim community, and some counted a small number of children from different ethnic backgrounds—primarily children of Muslim immigrant families—among their students. This trend, however, was paralleled and soon eclipsed by the establishment of separate full-time schools in Muslim immigrant communities that accelerated their educational efforts, especially in the late 1980s. At the close of the 20th century, the Council of Islamic Schools in North America estimated that the number of full-time schools had reached 150.

Among the factors that contributed to the growth of full-time schools was the steady influx of mostly well-educated professionals from the Middle East and South Asia that followed the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965. Partially out of concern over ASSIMILATION and the loss of tradition, these communities turned their attention to Islamic schools to strengthen the Muslim identity of the younger generation. Additionally, experiences with public schools that ranged from insensitivity to diversity to harassment and discrimination as well as the misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims in textbooks coincided with a general decline in public confidence in the public school system and its academic standards.

Most schools for Muslims established in the 1980s and 1990s were for kindergarten through eighth grade. They grew out of mosques or Islamic centers in local communities and typically followed curriculum guidelines provided by the local school district to which they added courses in Islamic studies and Arabic. Other characteristics included

at times specific school policies and behavioral norms such as the separation of girls and boys, particularly in junior and senior high schools, and rules concerning proper attire. Many schools faced initial challenges as they suffered from inexperienced and low-quality teaching staff, a dearth of appropriate curriculum and teaching materials, and accreditation problems. In response, a number of organizations came into existence in the 1990s that sought to provide resources and support to Muslim schools. Prominent among these was the Council of Islamic Schools in North America. Although these efforts decreased at the start of the 21st century, a growing number of Islamic schools received state accreditation, and some schools such as Universal School in Bridgeview, Illinois, distinguished themselves for sending their graduates to prestigious colleges and universities.

#### ISLAMIC SCHOOLS AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

Even though the number of Islamic full-time schools grew steadily in the last decades of the 20th century, scholars Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Adair T. Lummis noted in *Islamic Values in the United States* (1987) that only a minority of Muslim parents surveyed favored the establishment of separate full-time schools over the public school system. The reluctance was only partially based on financial concerns over higher costs for tuition. Perceived lower academic standards in Islamic schools as well as fears that these schools could alienate Muslim children from the American mainstream and hinder integration were also among the reasons for hesitation. To nurture their children's Muslim identity, parents frequently opted instead for some form of supplementary Islamic instruction in after-school programs or weekend schools.

By the beginning of the 21st century, studies such as Mohamed Nimer's *The North American Muslim Resource Guide* (2002) indicated that the overwhelming majority of Muslim children in the United States continued to attend public schools. At the same time, it could be noticed that Muslim parents and educators increasingly turned their attention to the shortcomings of public schools through their involvement in parent-teacher associations and local school boards. The growing American Muslim assertiveness concerning questions of education was equally reflected in the rise of the number of Islamic full-time schools, a trend that has persisted throughout the first years of the new century. As more and more of these schools secured accreditation, not the least as a result of parental demand, they accepted the educational norms of the larger society and became American institutions operating similarly to their Catholic and Jewish counterparts in the private sector of the American education system.

Florian Pohl



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**Islamic Society of North America**

In his inaugural address on January 20, 2009, President Barack Obama declared that the United States was a "nation of Christians and Muslims, Hindus and Jews." This was a defining moment in Muslim-American history, as well as in the history of one of the largest and most influential Muslim-American organizations, the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA). Seated next to Howard Dean, the outgoing chair of the Democratic National Committee, was ISNA's president, INGRID MATTSON. Mattson's proximity to the center of power that day demonstrated ISNA's emergence as a preeminent organization in Muslim America. By 2010, ISNA was the largest Muslim-American coalition in the United States, with a membership of more than 400 MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS. From a membership in 1983 of 5,324 individuals, it had grown to include 24,700 members in 2007. The 1983 operating budget of \$1.1 million had increased to \$3.7 million by 2007. In addition to offering various support services to its constituent members, it played a vital role as an authoritative voice in influencing—though never formally regulating—the relationships of Muslim Americans to one another and to larger American institutions, including the U.S. government and the media.

**BEGINNINGS (1981–1989)**

ISNA traces its roots to 1963, when the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA) was established to meet the religious and social needs of thousands of foreign Muslim students attending American colleges and universities. The MSA focused on student affairs and missionary work. As more students and other immigrants made the decision to settle permanently in the United States, many of them identified the need for a larger national organization that would address issues other than those of concern to students.

In the 1970s, MSA members began to discuss the possibility of forming a new, more encompassing organization. In 1981, after six years of discussions, Muslim-American educator and community activist Sayyid M. Syeed convened a meeting of the MSA, the Islamic Medical Association of North America, the ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS OF NORTH AMERICA, and the ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS to establish just such an umbrella organization. MSA was to become an organization strictly focused on student affairs, and its assets, non-student members, and community affiliates would fall under the purview of ISNA. *Islamic Horizons*, the national magazine associated with the MSA that was founded in the middle 1970s, would also become part of the ISNA umbrella. In 1982, Syeed and fellow MSA leaders announced the change at their annual Labor Day convention in Bloomington, Indiana, in the presence of more than 5,000 Muslim Americans.

Elections for a president, two vice presidents, and a *shura*, or board of directors, which were to be held on a biannual basis, were first conducted in 1983. The 5,324 members of the organization, together with the 310 institutional members such as mosques and Islamic centers, elected sociologist Ilyas Ba-Yunus as ISNA's first president. While ISNA's board consisted mainly of immigrant Muslim Americans, one AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM, Indianapolis religious leader Umar Khattab, was also elected. The newly elected board's priorities included the development of a comprehensive (full-time and part-time) educational system for Muslim Americans, the ongoing dissemination of Islamic books and pamphlets, the establishment of community centers, the training of Muslim activists, the promotion of social and other services geared toward Muslims, and the education of non-Muslims about Islam.

ISNA's focus on institutional development coincided with the building of more than 300 new mosques and Islamic centers in the 1980s. ISNA attempted to support these efforts in a number of ways. It assisted fund-raising through its speakers' bureau, provided draft constitutions and by-laws for the new mosques, offered federal tax-exempt status through its official group tax exemption, and wrote letters of support to overseas funders. In addition, ISNA's financial arm, the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT), provided loans,



In 2008, members of the Islamic Society of North America attend a bazaar at the group's annual convention, the largest annual Muslim-American convention during the first decade of the 21st century. (Edward E. Curtis IV)

investments, and the opportunities for the new mosques to be placed in trust, thus gaining the additional legal protections afforded under U.S. law.

ISNA actively promoted the establishment of full-time ISLAMIC SCHOOLS as well. It developed curricula, directly oversaw the creation of two model full-time Islamic schools in Chicago and Toronto, and established training programs for Muslim schoolteachers and administrators. In addition, ISNA continued the missionary work of MSA by developing correspondence courses and other training sessions in Arabic and Islamic studies, especially geared toward the thousands of Americans who converted to Islam each year.

In addition to focusing on the development of Muslim-American institutions, ISNA sustained institutional ties with various international Muslim groups. In the 1980s, roughly half the speakers at ISNA conventions were from outside of North America. Speakers included Sudanese religious and political leader Hassan Turabi, leaders of the socially conservative Jamaat-i Islami movement of Pakistan and India, and politicians from various Muslim-majority countries.

The largest share of ISNA's budget was designated to aid various relief efforts in the Muslim world. In 1983, ISNA spent \$1.1 million on its own operations, while it contributed \$1.9 million to Muslim relief and charitable causes around the world. The majority of ISNA's contributions came from the Muslim world, including \$3.4 million in donations reportedly from members of the Saudi and Qatari royal families, which allowed ISNA to purchase land and build its continental headquarters in Plainfield, Indiana, outside Indianapolis, in 1983.

In 1986, ISNA held a public meeting to determine its priorities for the next decade. As a result of the meeting, ISNA reaffirmed many of its initial goals and committed itself anew to helping fellow Muslims in North America "adopt Islam as a complete way of life," echoing the oft-repeated words of various participants in the global Islamic religious revival of the era. But the organization suffered from lack of permanent leadership at its Indiana headquarters. Numerous "acting" secretary-generals led the day-to-day operations of the organization, whose operating deficits put it in danger of

collapse. In 1989, ISNA's board failed to approve a budget for the institution, and the North American Islamic Trust assumed responsibility for ISNA's financial operations.

#### TRANSITIONS (1990–1993)

The early 1990s were a transitional period for ISNA. The only sustainable ISNA programs during this period focused on PHILANTHROPY in the Muslim world, and their revenues declined on an annual basis. ISNA's ability to raise funds overseas was negatively affected by its decision to oppose U.S. involvement in the Gulf War in 1990, a position that angered Saudi Arabia and other U.S. allies that had previously contributed to ISNA. ISNA subsequently scaled back its activities, only intermittently publishing *Islamic Horizons*, for example. Staff at the Indiana headquarters was also cut. In a sense, this was the price of independence from some of its previous foreign supporters.

The proliferation of many Muslim-American public affairs groups during this period can be traced in part to the vacuum created by the decline of ISNA. The AMERICAN MUSLIM COUNCIL (AMC) was established in 1990, while the MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY (MAS) began operations in 1993. The COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR) was formed in 1994. In 1993, however, ISNA sought to rebuild the organization by appointing Sayyid Syeed, one of the group's initial organizers, as secretary-general. He was the first permanent chief executive officer of the organization in a decade. He had served as the leader of the International Federations of Islamic Student Organizations and also director of the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT (IIIT).

#### INSTITUTIONAL SUCCESS (1993–2001)

With new leadership in place, ISNA set out to increase fund-raising in North America by establishing the ISNA Founders Coordinating Committee (IFCC). The IFCC consisted of a committee of ISNA's most committed and generous donors, who pledged to raise further contributions from Muslims in North America. Many of them were successful professional men and women who used their extensive social networks to raise funds. Physician Ghulam Nabi Mir served as the first chair of this committee. The number of donors in the United States increased from 200 in the 1990s to more than 7,000 in 2004. For the first time, North American charitable contributions outpaced overseas donations. ISNA continued to welcome contributions from overseas but stressed that it was not an organization of "Muslims in America" but of Muslim Americans. It emphasized that Muslims and Islam could flourish in a pluralistic and democratic environment.

ISNA hired professional staff to manage its annual convention, its magazine, and its fund-raising efforts. While previous employees tended to be religious missionaries, this new generation of managers were pious Muslims not previously a

part of any religious revival movements. Though they sometimes lacked the same extensive training in Islamic studies and Arabic that their predecessors possessed, they had been trained, often formally, in business management and non-profit program development.

Using those skills, they established the ISNA Fellowship in Nonprofit Management and Governance. In 1998, ISNA entered into a partnership with the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy, offering Muslim students the opportunity to intern at ISNA in return for a stipend and a scholarship that enabled them to take graduate-level courses at Indiana University in nonprofit management. Between 1999 and 2001, 10 Muslims underwent this academic training, and six of the 10 participants went on to serve in senior staff positions at ISNA. Two of the participants took leadership positions at CAIR and the national network of mosques aligned with W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008). Though this program ended in 2001 due to lack of funds, it resumed in 2007 with a \$1.4 million grant from the Kingdom Foundation, chaired by Saudi Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal.

In this period of institutional success, ISNA concentrated on a smaller number of initiatives. Rather than offering direct services at the local level, it engaged in national collaborative efforts. Careful budgeting produced surpluses. *Islamic Horizons*, which in the past was published intermittently, became a bimonthly publication. Its format was revised to a slick, glossy newsmagazine focused on North American Muslims. Circulation increased to 50,000, likely making it the largest Muslim-American periodical.

The number of attendees at ISNA's annual conventions grew from 6,000 to 35,000. Focusing on issues of concern directly related to the needs of Muslim Americans—from health care and politics to youth and philanthropy—the conventions featured speakers largely from the community itself. ISNA choreographed a grassroots convention that invited an array of Muslims to participate in the conference program, featuring numerous sessions run by community members. More than 500 Muslim businesses set up booths at a convention bazaar.

ISNA sought to incorporate Muslims from a variety of backgrounds in both its activities and its leadership structure. In this period, ISNA's membership elected three women, INGRID MATTSON (1963– ), Khadija Haffajee, and Amina Jandali, to serve on the organization's board. In 2001, Mattson was elected, unopposed, to the vice-presidency of ISNA. Dawood Zwink, a WHITE MUSLIM AMERICAN, and Siraj Wahhaj, an African-American Muslim, were elected vice presidents of ISNA; national leaders with their own followings, including W. D. Mohammed and JAMIL ABDULLAH AL-AMIN (1943– ), were elected to the board, opening new dialogue between ISNA and other national entities. In 1993, seeking to clarify that it did not consider itself the sole voice



of Muslim Americans, ISNA had also become a part of the National Shura [Consultation] Council, which included W. D. Mohammed's community, Jamil Al-Amin's community, the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA, and, eventually, the CAIR, MAS, and the MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL.

ISNA also partnered with national INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS such as the National Council of Churches, and sought to develop close ties to various offices in the federal government. Referring to the close relationship that Christian evangelical preacher Billy Graham had developed with U.S. presidents from Eisenhower to Clinton, ISNA secretary-general Syeed told his staff that the mission of ISNA was to become "the Muslim Rev. Billy Graham. ISNA should serve as the conscience of our government and provide the government a partner to dialogue with rather than one to fight with."

Though ISNA did not wish to become a social service agency offering direct services to its members, it established Departments of Social Services (1997) and Community Development (1999), which sought to coordinate such services at a national level. These offices attempted to form Muslim-American approaches to the everyday concerns of Muslims in North America, addressing issues such as MARRIAGE, YOUTH, domestic violence, conflict resolution, nonprofit management, refugee resettlement, full-time and part-time Islamic schools, ISLAMIC FINANCE and banking, and the use of the INTERNET in Muslim life. ISNA asked its members and partners to organize various meetings and conferences to discuss topics such as Islam among Latina/o Americans, Islam in America, Islam in American prisons, and Muslim refugee resettlement. It also utilized the pages of *Islamic Horizons* and its Web site to address these topics and offered small training sessions.

#### ON THE NATIONAL STAGE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, several national Muslim-American organizations, including ISNA, issued a unified press release condemning the attacks, requesting quick apprehension of the perpetrators, and urging the MEDIA to be cautious in their speculations about who the hijackers were until their identities could be confirmed. The ability of national organizations to coordinate a public statement condemning terrorism so soon after the attacks spoke to the partnerships and collaborations that had arisen among various Muslim-American groups.

ISNA's organizational strength also led government officials to lean on the group as it began to respond to the issues affecting Muslims in the United States and abroad. ISNA's immediate past president, MUZAMMIL H. SIDDIQI (1943– ), was invited to a prayer service coordinated by the White House under President George W. Bush and held at the National Cathedral. ISNA also used its previous con-

nections to the government to coordinate on issues of law enforcement. When Muslim-American charities were raided in March 2002, for example, ISNA worked with Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill to call for greater transparency within Muslim charities, as well as within government. These partnerships resulted in Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Juan Zarate's attending ISNA's annual convention and regional conferences between 2002 and 2005. ISNA worked with the Treasury Department to obtain a "best practices for charities" and organized a community response to the document in 2004.

In 2005, Sayyid Syeed stepped down as secretary-general after having served in that role for more than 12 years. Syeed's tenure as secretary-general had resulted in fiscal restraint, budget surpluses, a growing endowment, and a national reputation as Muslim America's most influential organization. He relocated to WASHINGTON, D.C., to establish ISNA's National Office of Interfaith and Community Alliances. ISNA's board selected Muneer Fareed, a former South African imam, rising Islamic studies scholar, and entrepreneur as its new secretary-general.

In 2005, ISNA's membership also elected its first female president, Ingrid Mattson. Under her leadership and that of Fareed, ISNA implemented its strategic priorities by phasing out the Department of Community Development and establishing several new departments devoted to youth development, leadership development, education services, and communication and community outreach. The annual convention continued to be a successful event, drawing more than 35,000 Muslim Americans a year, and *Islamic Horizons* increased its circulation, becoming available through Lexis Nexis and other Web-based databases.

ISNA sought to create more intra-Muslim unity. In 2007, ISNA signed an agreement between SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICANS and SUNNI MUSLIM AMERICANS striving for greater unity and disavowing discord. This initiative was a response to the concern among Muslim Americans about the rising levels of sectarian conflict in Iraq. ISNA brought Sunni and Shi'a Muslim American leaders together to highlight that such sectarian conflict was not inherent to the faith. During this era, some progressive Muslims criticized ISNA as perpetuating a conservative view of Islam when it refused to support the female leadership of mixed-gender prayer in March 2005. Ingrid Mattson countered by identifying what she argued was the need to focus on more substantive women's issues, calling for more women to become leaders on mosque boards and for mosques to provide equal access to the mosque for women and men.

ISNA also expanded its efforts at reaching out to non-Muslim organizations. In 2007, ISNA became a signatory to "A Common Word between Us," a declaration signed by more than 300 Christian scholars and organizations and



138 Muslim scholars and organizations that sought to create healthier relationships between Christians and Muslims. ISNA also participated in various interfaith events and initiatives, including the National Prayer Breakfast held before the inauguration of President Obama in 2009.

In 2005, ISNA cosponsored the issuing of a FATWA, or religious opinion, against terrorism by the FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA. It swiftly responded to acts of terrorism in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world by issuing public condemnation of the acts. At the same time, it continued to speak out against torture, civil liberty violations, and the detention of enemy combatants at a U.S. naval facility at GUANTÁNAMO BAY, Cuba.

### CONCLUSION

Since its founding in 1981, ISNA has attempted not only to shape Muslim-American life but also to serve as a bridge between Muslim America and the rest of the nation. Despite the organizational challenges it has faced throughout its history, by the end of the first decade of the 21st century, it had largely succeeded in its mission, becoming a powerful Muslim-American voice in dialogue with the mainstream media, interfaith organizations, and the U.S. government. Once relying primarily on a relatively small number of wealthy foreign donors to sustain its operations, ISNA changed its development strategies in the 1990s, targeting Muslim Americans themselves and broadening the base of its financial support. That strategy yielded a broader impact among the lives of Muslim Americans who had a larger stake in the work of the organization.

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### Islamic thought

Muslim Americans come from almost every kind of national, ethnic, and cultural background. Despite these differences, Islamic thought in the United States has generally involved questions of moral philosophy: how to create ethical lives that are also fulfilling, or what is sometimes called “the good life.” Because mainstream American culture and society are not organized around Islamic beliefs and practices, but were often formed in reference to Protestant Christian ones, individual Muslim Americans face greater challenges and pressure to determine how to live in accordance with Islamic ideals.

Both immigrants and Muslims born in the United States have dealt with issues of exclusion from the dominant cul-

ture and society, affecting their efforts to live the good life. African Americans and Latinos are often the first marginalized Muslim groups to come to mind, but exclusion is not limited to Muslims of non-European descent. In recent decades, more women and gay Muslims of various ethnic backgrounds, as well as those from nondominant Islamic perspectives, such as Shi‘ism, SUFISM, and Ismai‘ili Islam, have argued for enlarging definitions of Islamic ethics and practice within Muslim communities and within the larger American society.

Americans of many religious backgrounds have argued that religion should remain separate from public life, but such critics have not always recognized the historic and contemporary influence of Protestantism in shaping American culture and society. Because religion is never completely separate from other aspects of life in the United States, religiously observant Muslim Americans have debated what role Islam should play in public life. These debates have often been at the center of Islamic thought in the United States.

### ISLAMIC THOUGHT BEFORE THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Most Muslim Americans in the 21st century are the multiple-generation descendants of early African-American Muslims and other immigrants, the latter of whom began arriving in the 1880s. Because the first Muslims in the United States came as slaves, only fragments of their ideas about Islamic law, ethics, and other intellectual traditions exist. Speech and song were especially important means of passing on thoughts for these Muslims. With few exceptions, scholars have been able to chart only the writings of later generations of Muslims in the United States, generally beginning with the late 19th century.

Edward Wilmot Blyden, a Presbyterian missionary to Africa, argued in *Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race* (1887) that Islam was a more beneficial religion for Africans than Christianity. His work inspired African Americans of the early 20th century who endeavored to combine Islam with financial, social, and political independence. ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB was another influential 19th-century figure. One of the first white converts to Islam, he attempted to proselytize other middle-class white Americans by presenting Islam as more ethical, moral, and rational than any other religion. His thought, both published and delivered at the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in CHICAGO, helped some Americans begin to consider Islam as a rational and ethical faith.

### ISLAMIC THOUGHT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The 20th century witnessed the growth of Islam in African-American communities and saw an increase in Muslim immigration from other parts of the world—especially following the 1965 partial repeal of immigration restrictions. Muslims often had to choose between living in enclaves and

facing the pressures of being Muslim in a country where they found little acceptance of Islam and experienced daily discrimination. These combined factors made finding work and enjoying fulfilling and faithful lives more difficult than for Americans of numerically or culturally dominant groups.

During the latter half of the 20th century, American Muslims established independent political and cultural organizations. While a few had existed previously, most Muslims could have published their contributions to American thought and culture only if they worked within non-Muslim institutions such as private Christian-centered universities or government-sponsored policy institutes such as the Council on Foreign Relations. For this reason, the desire to create and disseminate independent Muslim thought has been an important factor in Muslim-American history.

#### **Authority and Community**

Americans often assume that imams, those who lead Friday PRAYERS, can meet the spiritual and social needs of Muslim communities just as Christian leaders in America have tried to do for their communities. Historically, this has not been the role of imams elsewhere. While trained in theology, imams left issues of practical and legal concerns to specialists in shari'a law and left concerns of social and economic welfare to governments. Such overlapping support networks are weak in the United States and were not formed with Muslims in mind, thus causing Muslim leaders, like Catholic and Jewish ones before them, to try to fill these gaps. Thinkers who dealt with such practical issues often relied on traditional Islamic thought and scholarship written in other times and places, although the legacy of Islamic thought and scholarship can be interpreted and adapted in many ways.

In Sunni Islam, there is no central authority such as the Roman Catholic pope to serve the world community. Twelver SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICANS look to their ayatollah and imams. ISMA'ILI MUSLIM AMERICANS look to the AGA KHAN. Sufi Muslims often consult the leaders of their orders for help in relating faith to practice. In many Muslim countries, the state often has some relation to determining community practice, since all or parts of the civil law are based on different schools of shari'a law. That is not the case in the United States.

Muslim Americans have striven in various ways to relate Islamic law and ethics to American life. Some organizations, such as the FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA, have relied on teachings that are part of longer Islamic traditions in other countries and have tried to create structures in the United States that blend these traditions with contemporary American practice. Leaders such as W. D. MOHAMMED, leader of the nation's largest AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM network of mosques, have argued at times that a separate body of law and ethics addressing the peculiarities of American

Muslim life should be developed. Meanwhile, a few Muslim Americans have argued that American life is already in harmony with Islam, because American laws and institutions developed out of the same "Abrahamic" ethic shared by Jews, Christians, and Muslims.

Because of the diversity of Muslim Americans, an important question has been how each group's relations with American culture and politics affect their relationships with each other and vice versa. This complex question arouses more tension during times of crisis when Muslims in general are accused of being un-American or when some Muslim Americans are denied the same rights, benefits, and privileges of their fellow citizens.

#### **Justice and Cohesion within the Community and Outside**

Under the American political and economic systems, two interrelated types of justice take precedence: representative (having an influential part in American culture, politics, and society) and distributive (being afforded the same economic and social resources as other Americans). While Muslims who immigrated to America during the 1950s and after tended to favor integration and focus on representation, Muslim Americans with longer histories in America of racial and economic discrimination generally focused on distributive justice and were suspicious of the power or promises of representation to achieve it. Meanwhile, concerns over representative and distributive justice have been important to developments *within* Muslim American communities as well for Muslims living in American society.

ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, MALCOLM X, W. D. MOHAMMED, and LOUIS FARRAKHAN are some of the better-known leaders who have dealt with these issues on behalf of African-American Muslims. They attained a measure of "the good life" by creating religious, social, and economic communities separate from the dominant American ones in which they experienced discrimination. Originally all part of the NATION OF ISLAM, which drew inspiration from early 20th-century black nationalist leaders such as NOBLE DREW ALI and his MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, they combined nationalist politics of black manhood and self-determination, early 20th-century ideas about race and science, and Islamic themes in a larger philosophy for living. Noble Drew Ali had drawn inspiration from the originally South Asian Ahmadiyya group, which attracted African Americans with Shaikh Ahmad Din's message of peace, equality, freedom, and interethnic worship. Large numbers of Latino Muslims also joined the Nation during the 20th century but founded independent organizations such as PIEDAD in the 1990s.

While Malcolm X and W. D. Mohammed both adopted Sunni Islam and recanted some of their separatist teachings, they remained committed to economic and social justice.

Later in the 20th century, Muhammad moved toward working with other ethnic and religious groups, as did Farrakhan toward the turn of the 21st century. Other African-American Muslims in the 1950s worked for economic and social justice from within Sunni Islam, such as Sheikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal. Still others broke off from the Nation to create their own group. These breakaways, known as the FIVE PERCENTERS, rely on numerology and the secret power of language instead of the Qur'an and Hadith and have expressed some of their thoughts on black liberation in rap and HIP-HOP music.

Many of the Muslim immigrants who arrived in the United States after WORLD WAR II lived in intellectual worlds very different from those of African-American Muslims. MAHMOUD ABDUL-RAUF, an Egyptian educated at al-Azhar University in Cairo, was selected in 1965 by U.N. diplomats from Muslim countries to serve as director of the Islamic Cultural Center in New York and, later, of the ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C. Abdul-Rauf published works to guide Muslim Americans on issues ranging from belief and worship to family formation and economics.

Other notable academics who wrote during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s on Islamic ethics and life in the modern world were Palestinian ISMA'IL AL-FARUQI, FAZLUR RAHMAN from Pakistan, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr of Iran. Like them, Abdul-Rauf combined Islamic philosophy and science with European and American humanities and technical training. Each wrote on comparative religion and ethics and attempted to build bridges among Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Americans. Furthermore, each saw involvement in American society as key to ensuring justice worldwide. Al-Faruqi endeavored to establish separate Islamic educational institutions in the 1980s, while Nasr established a foundation for traditionalist philosophy and studies of Sufism in the 1990s.

Calls for intra-Muslim unity and interreligious dialogue began in the 1950s and 1960s, overlapping with the rise of multiculturalism and feminism in the United States. INAYAT KHAN was a South Asian immigrant who challenged Americans in the 1910s to join in religiously and ethnically inclusive practices of Sufism. His SUFI ORDER OF THE WEST has been run by his descendants since his death. Khan also challenged American racism and the social problems related to American capitalism.

With the arrival in the United States of Sufis from around the world after 1965, many began to see Sufi Muslim practices as exemplifying Islamic ideals of ethnic and gender equality, although Sufis were often less concerned with American economic and political issues. Varieties of Sufism have also appealed to more Americans of European descent and gained many white converts, while occupying an important place in American interfaith endeavors. Less open to Sufism, the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION was established in 1963 to

meet the diverse needs of college-age Muslims, while their offshoot, the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA, established 1981), works with and for Muslims of all ages. Founded by Arab immigrants and now officially interethnic, these organizations host national conferences and publish printed and online resources dealing with issues ranging from politics to pluralism.

While Muslim-American WOMEN are a part of all of the communities mentioned here and are as politically, culturally, and religiously diverse as other Muslims, some of them have argued that Islamic law and ethics should be interpreted and applied by and for women as well as MEN. AMINA WADUD was one of the first women to publish and speak on issues of gender and sexual justice, while Asra Nomani has organized events to challenge male control over religious leadership. INGRID MATTSON, the first female President of ISNA, supports male religious leadership but argues that religious leaders are given too much power over and responsibility for Muslim communities.

#### TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AND BEYOND

During the latter part of the 20th century, Muslim Americans spoke to the global community as *American Muslims* while speaking to the American community as *Muslim Americans*. Muslim Americans have thoughts about the range of social, political, and cultural issues that face U.S. residents but have often been pressed to speak about terrorism before anything else. In 2005, the Fiqh Council of North America issued a fatwa, or binding religious opinion, that condemned terrorism and religious extremism. Though Muslim Americans have decried terrorism of any kind, most have been pressured to defend themselves after the attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. Many are engaged in local interfaith groups, while some, such as members of the AMERICAN ISLAMIC COLLEGE, are specifically devoted to these endeavors on a larger scale.

Although it is impossible to account for the many trends of Islamic thought that have developed over more than three centuries in America, questions about the nature of "the good life" and ability to achieve it have long occupied the minds of Muslim Americans and will likely continue in the future.

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**Ismail, Vehbi (1919–2008)** *religious leader, Albanian nationalist*

Born on November 25, 1919, in Shkodër, Albania, Vehbi Ismail studied theology at the Islamic University in Tiranë, Albania, and al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. The son of Ismail Alkovaji, the grand mufti of Islam in Albania, Ismail was advised to remain outside Albania after he completed his education in Egypt due to the 1945 communist takeover and the subsequent suppression and banning of religious observances and institutions. From his position of unofficial exile, Ismail was an ardent Albanian nationalist who pursued the overthrow of communist rule and the reestablishment of religious institutions in his homeland.

In 1949, Ismail was invited to DETROIT, MICHIGAN, by the Albanian Moslem Society to lead their congregation and develop a mosque for their growing community. In the early 1950s, this group converted a former church in Detroit into a mosque, but they quickly outgrew this facility and raised funds to build the Albanian Islamic Center, dedicated in 1963. Ismail served as imam, or religious leader, of this mosque for the next three decades until his retirement in 1996.

Ismail was also a religious scholar who published widely in Arabic, Albanian, and English. Among his best-known books is his 1962 volume, *Muhammad, the Last Prophet*, written in English and translated into eight languages. Ismail took a special interest in ensuring that Albanian Muslims continued to have access to scholarship produced in other parts of the Muslim world, so a good deal of his intellectual project involved translating important works from Albanian into Arabic or English and works from Arabic into Albanian. He also began publishing an Albanian journal in Detroit, *Jeta Musilmane Shqiptare (The Albanian Muslim Life)* in 1949. In 1958, he turned this journal over to the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

and began editing the journal in the English language as the *Muslim Life*.

Ismail was a broad-minded scholar who wrote with great compassion about a variety of Muslim intellectual and theological traditions. In Detroit, he played a leadership role in bridging differences between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, between members of the BEKTASHI SUFI ORDER and non-Bektashis, and between Muslims and Christians.

Ismail had befriended King Farouk of Egypt during his years as a student in Egypt, and on his arrival in the United States he sought similar relationships with figures of power on behalf of Albanian nationalism. He advised several U.S. presidential administrations on Albanian affairs and was sent on a fact-finding mission to Albania in 1994 by President Bill Clinton. His work on behalf of American and Albanian Muslims was recognized by the U.S. Senate in 1999. He died on May 17, 2008, and was survived by his wife, Betty, and his children, Ali, Ahmed, and Fatima.

Sally Howell

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**Isma'ili Muslim Americans**

Isma'ili Muslims constitute one of two principal groups of SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICANS; they are smaller in number than the larger group of Ithna 'ashari, or Twelver, Shi'a Muslims. Like all Shi'a Muslims, they trace their history to a belief that on the death of the prophet Muhammad in 632 C.E., the leadership of the Muslim community continued among his progeny through a succession of imams, or leaders, descended from his daughter, Fatima, and son-in-law, Ali ibn Abi Talib. During their history, these Shi'a Muslims split into various subgroups, and the Isma'ilis derive their name from the fact that on the death of the Shi'a imam Jafar as-Sadiq in 765, they supported the right of his son Isma'il to inherit the office of imam. In 1094, the Isma'ilis further divided in a dispute over the succession to Imam Mustansirbillah. Those supporting the claims of his son Nizar were called Nizaris, while those following his son Mustali were called Bohras, including the DAUDI BOHRAS. This article focuses on the Nizaris, the larger of the Isma'ili-American communities.

With a worldwide population of 15 million at the beginning of the 21st century, Nizari Isma'ilis are dispersed among



various nations in East Africa, South and central Asia, the Middle East, and, more recently, Europe and North America. In the first decade of the 21st century, they were the only Shi'a community with a living imam. Called the AGA KHAN, this person is regarded by Nizaris to be a direct descendant of the prophet Muhammad. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the holder of this hereditary office was Karim Al-Husayni, Aga Khan IV (1936– ), who is believed to be the 49th imam.

An important aspect of Isma'ili doctrine concerns the imam's responsibility to look after both the spiritual and the material well-being of his followers. In the 20th century, Aga Khan IV and his predecessor Aga Khan III, have sought to influence not only the religious lives of their followers but also to improve their social and economic conditions. They have attempted to improve access to education and health care, enhance the role of women in the community, and further economic development among Nizaris.

#### AMERICAN ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Significant immigration of Nizari Isma'ilis to the United States began only after the passage of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965. Before then, the few Isma'ilis in the country were mostly businessmen and university students. Beginning in 1968, Isma'ilis from South Asia and East Africa immigrated to the United States in larger numbers to seek economic opportunities. Many of these were professionals or businesspeople. In the 1970s and 1980s, as a result of political upheavals in Uganda, Pakistan, India, and Burma, Isma'ilis from these countries sought refuge in the United States. Turmoil and religious persecution in Tajikistan and Afghanistan in the 1990s caused more Isma'ili immigration, though in smaller numbers than earlier waves.

By the first decade of the 21st century, there were approximately 75,000 Nizari Isma'ilis in the United States from remarkably diverse backgrounds, including some of Syrian and Iranian origin. The largest concentrations of Isma'ili populations were in Houston, San Antonio, Austin, Dallas, ATLANTA, LOS ANGELES, CHICAGO, Miami, and NEW YORK CITY. Each of these cities had at least one or two JAMAATKHANAS, or centers for Nizari Isma'ili congregational worship. By 2009, there were 70 such centers in North America.

#### GOVERNANCE

In 1986, Aga Khan IV created a uniform organizational structure for Isma'ili communities worldwide the better to facilitate social governance. For each country with significant Isma'ili populations, he designated several sets of institutions. In the United States, these institutions are organized at a regional and national level. The National Council oversees

issues of social governance and planning at the national level, while its regional counterparts are responsible for implementation in seven regions of the United States: Northeast, Southeast, Florida, Midwest, Northern Texas, Southwest, and West. Similarly, the National Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Board, with its seven regional counterparts, controls matters of religious practice in *jamaatkhanas* and the imparting of religious education.

Likewise, the national and regional Conciliation and Arbitration Boards assist in resolving commercial and domestic disputes among Isma'ilis. National and regional Grants and Review Boards oversee institutional compliance with standards of financial discipline and accountability. National and regional Social Welfare and Health Boards are charged with various responsibilities, including the provision of indigent care, promotion of nutritional and mental health, and ensuring access to primary health care and social services, especially for the uninsured. Since Houston is the city with the largest Isma'ili population in the United States, it serves as headquarters of all national institutions.

In the United States, this large array of institutions is run mostly by Isma'ilis, many of whom are professionals and businesspeople who volunteer their time and knowledge in service of the larger community. The activities of these volunteers are closely coordinated with the Aga Khan's office in Aiglemont, France. Service to others is a key part of the Isma'ili social ethic, inculcated in Isma'ili youth from a young age. Hence, through these institutions, an impressive army of Isma'ili volunteers are engaged in serving the needs of the Isma'ili community in areas such as EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, social welfare, early childhood and YOUTH development and elderly care. To support these activities both nationally and internationally, many Isma'ilis make generous voluntary contributions to the Aga Khan and his institutions.

#### INTERNATIONAL PHILANTHROPY

The Aga Khan Foundation USA (AKF USA), headquartered in WASHINGTON, D.C., is a branch of the Geneva-based Aga Khan Foundation, a nondenominational, nonprofit international development agency that promotes creative solutions to problems that impede social development, primarily in Asia and East Africa. It is a modern vehicle for traditional PHILANTHROPY in the Isma'ili Muslim community under the leadership of the Aga Khan. The AKF USA seeks funding from private and public sources in the United States to support its activities internationally.

Prominent partners include the U.S. Agency for International Development, Microsoft Corporation, Gates Foundation, Ford Foundation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Department of State as well as multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, International

Finance Corporation, and various agencies of the United Nations. Every year, with the assistance of volunteers from the Isma'ili community, AKF USA organizes Partnership Walks in Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, and Los Angeles to raise funds for its activities, especially in Africa and Asia.

Focus Humanitarian Assistance USA, headquartered in Falls Church, Virginia, is a disaster-relief and emergency risk-management agency founded in 1994. It has facilitated support for victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 and also major disasters abroad. Both AFK USA and Focus are partner agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), a group of development agencies with mandates ranging from health and education to architecture, culture, microfinance, rural development, promotion of private-sector enterprise, and revitalization of historic cities. The AKDN has collaboration agreements with several American universities, including Harvard, MIT, and the University of Texas, Austin.

*Ali Asani*

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**Israel** See UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS.



**Jackson, Chris** See ABDUL-RAUF, MAHMOUD.

### ***jamaatkhana* (jama‘at khana)**

*Jamaatkhanas*, or meeting places, are the multiuse complexes in which ISMA‘ILI MUSLIM AMERICANS gather for prayer and other communal activities such as teaching, festivals, and social services. Though the word “jamatkhana” has sometimes been used by other Muslims, *jamaatkhana* is overwhelmingly associated in the Muslim-American community with Nizari Isma‘ili Muslims, a branch of the Shi‘a Muslim community that regards the AGA KHAN as its leader and traces its origins to a disagreement over which relative of the prophet Muhammad was the rightful leader of the Muslim community. As of the first decade of the 21st century, there were approximately 70 *jamaatkhanas* throughout the United States.

#### **ARCHITECTURAL PRINCIPLES**

*Jamaatkhanas* reflect the interest of the AGA KHAN, the leader of the Nizari Isma‘ili community, in architecture, particularly as it pertains to the Islamic world. He established the Aga Khan Award for architecture and the Aga Khan Program for Islamic architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to promote research on Islamic architectural traditions and to encourage design models that served the multiple economic, cultural, and environmental needs of Muslim societies in their local contexts. His key concern has been to focus on the built environment so as to serve those living in it, while also preserving its historical sociocultural heritage. The designs take into consideration the physical environment, climate, building materials, and socioeconomic factors, and draw on advances in technology and best practices in modern architecture.

These basic principles have been expressed in the purpose-built *jamaatkhanas* of Isma‘ili Muslims in Western countries. Since the late 1970s, the Aga Khan has commissioned *darkhanas*, or headquarter *jamaatkhanas*, in major cities in Canada and the United States that have high concentrations of immigrant Isma‘ili Muslims. These flagship *jamaatkhanas* give unique attention to expressing Isma‘ili history, culture,

and values. Their distinctive architecture preserves their Muslim identity without disturbing, disrupting, and sharply demarcating the structure from the surroundings and society. Its style reflects a creative combination of modern architectural practice, advanced building technologies, aesthetics of Islamic architecture, and organization of spaces that serve the practical needs of the Isma‘ili community. *Darkhanas* serve as outreach to the public, whereas other *jamaatkhanas* remain private for use by Isma‘ilis only. *Darkhanas* have regularly scheduled tours that welcome the public to learn about this small Shi‘a Muslim community.

The first *darkhana* built in Canada was in Burnaby, Vancouver, because it was the city where the earliest wave of Isma‘ili immigrants, mostly refugees from Uganda, was established. The foundation ceremony, held in 1982, included government officials such as the mayor and the lieutenant governor of the province, who together with the Aga Khan opened the *jamaatkhana*. The event signaled that the Isma‘ili Muslims were making a commitment to reside permanently in Canada and to contribute to the country as citizens. In his speech, the Aga Khan IV praised Canada for its pluralism and religious freedom, and for encouraging immigrants to maintain their cultural heritage while integrating themselves into Canadian society. He emphasized that the *darkhana* was built not only to serve the needs of the Isma‘ili community but also to fit harmoniously into the surrounding environment, adding to its aesthetic nature, and expressing a mood of openness.

#### **LEADERSHIP**

Presiding over the religious ceremonies in *jamaatkhanas*, as well as officiating at marriages and funerals, are religious officials called *mukhis* and *kamadias*. These are lay members of a local congregation appointed by the Aga Khan for three-year terms to serve as his representatives and also provide pastoral care to their congregation. In larger congregations, married couples are appointed to these positions, with the wives of *mukhis* and *kamadias* tending to the needs of female members of the congregation. In smaller communities, however, women have sometimes been appointed *mukhis* and *kamadias* in their own right. In contrast to many other Muslim communities,

Isma'ili women can officiate at religious functions, including leading mixed-gender congregational prayers. Generally speaking, Aga Khan IV, following his predecessor's policies on promoting gender equality, has encouraged prominent roles for women in the community, although there are social and cultural barriers to their participation in the higher echelons of the community's institutions.

#### FUNCTIONS OF JAMAATKHANA

Various religious activities take place in *jamaatkhanas*. Their central function is to provide a dignified space of assembly for prayer and the conduct of religious ceremonies. In addition, they provide community centers for lectures, religious instruction, social activities, counseling, and administration. Many cities have several *jamaatkhanas* to serve Isma'ilis concentrated in their various parts, including the suburbs.

Only Isma'ilis are allowed into the building during religious services to preserve the sanctity of prayer and to affirm their common bond as spiritual children of their imam. A ceremony called *bay'ah* is performed when an Isma'ili baby is born to swear allegiance to the living imam. As is true of all Muslims who form the *ummah* (literally, community), irrespective of their cultural and geographic backgrounds, Isma'ilis consider themselves to be a tightly knit extended family united by their faith in the living imam, who accepts to guide them in their spiritual and worldly lives.

Isma'ili Muslims are required to attend *jamaatkhana* and pray daily. The main prayer is used to recite the *du'a* three times a day—once in the morning and twice in the evening. Several rituals take place in addition to reciting the *du'a*, such as devotional songs, readings of the imam's guidance, and food and monetary offerings. These rituals and devotional prayers have changed over time, adapting to the conditions of life and to different cultural and religious contexts.

Contemporary Isma'ili practices are shaped largely by traditions stemming from South Asia, but with globalization and contact with Isma'ilis from different regions of the world including Central Asia and the Middle East, the latter's devotional expressions have also been incorporated. In contrast to the segregation of gender observed in most mosques, Isma'ilis pray together: Men sit along one side of the prayer hall and women on the other. Both face the front wall, where officers appointed by the imam sit behind low tables. All members of the assembly sit on the ground, which is carpeted. After prayers, Isma'ili men and women socialize and interact with one another. Women do not wear the veil, though some like to wear a scarf, particularly older immigrant women used to doing so in their country of origin.

New immigrants in North America have brought their cultural and religious traditions from all over the world. As a natural part of their settlement, they have created new spaces to express their religious identities. These diverse religious

and community centers help to root them as citizens in their new domicile. The *jamaatkhanas* of the Shi'a Isma'ili Muslims form part of this varied, pluralist religious landscape, enriching it architecturally and socially.

*Tazim R. Kassam with Ali Asani*

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#### Jamal, Ahmad (Frederick Russell Jones) (1930– ) jazz pianist, keyboardist, composer

A popular and highly influential jazz pianist for more than five decades, Ahmad Jamal developed a percussive piano style that influenced a multitude of jazz keyboardists and other musicians.

Ahmad Jamal was born Frederick Russell Jones on July 2, 1930, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His first experience with the keyboard was at age three with prompting from his uncle. Beginning formal piano studies at age seven, Jamal continued to study the instrument through high school, taking instruction from noted singer Mary Cardwell Dawson and pianist James Miller.

Jamal joined the musicians' union at age 14 and began touring professionally on graduation from Pittsburgh's Westinghouse High School, where one of his classmates was jazz singer DAKOTA STATON (1930–97). Starting with the St. Louis-based George Hudson Orchestra, Jamal soon formed his first group as leader, The Four Strings, which quickly dis-



Pianist Ahmad Jamal performs at the Mt. Hood Festival of Jazz in Oregon in 1983. His *Ahmad Jamal Live at the Pershing: But Not for Me* (1958) was one of the best-selling jazz records of the 1950s. (Rich Iwasaki/Lebrecht Music & Arts)



banded. Despite this setback, Jamal worked with such jazz luminaries as Charlie Parker, Stan Getz, Dizzy Gillespie, and Billie Holiday. During this period, Jamal converted to Islam and became an Ahmadi Muslim, following the teachings of the Ahmadiyya sect.

Jamal formed his next group, the Three Strings, in 1951. The trio was discovered by Columbia Records talent scout John Hammond during a gig at New York's Embers Club. Hammond promptly signed them to a recording deal. His first recording for Columbia "race" label Okeh (catering specifically to black record buyers) was "Ahmad's Blues." Making Chicago their base, Jamal's trio, which at this time featured bassist Israel Crosby and drummer Vernell Fournier, settled in as the house band at the Pershing Hotel and signed with Chicago-based Argo Records. At the Pershing, Jamal recorded his seminal live album, *Ahmad Jamal Live at the Pershing: But Not for Me* (1958), which yielded the massive jazz hit "Poncia." One of the best-selling jazz albums of the decade, *But Not for Me's* success enabled Jamal to open his own club and restaurant, the Alhambra, where his band held residence when not on tour.

Continuing to record for Argo Records throughout this period, Jamal released several influential albums, such as *Live at the Pershing and the Spotlight Club* (1958), *Happy Moods* (1960), and *All of You* (1961). His uniquely percussive piano style influenced the sound of such jazz legends and nonkeyboardists as Miles Davis. After his fruitful relationship with Argo Records ended in 1968, Jamal signed with Impulse! Records and subsequently with the Atlantic and Verve labels.

In 1994, Jamal received the American Jazz Masters fellowship award from the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2007, the French government inducted Jamal into the Order of the Arts and Letters. The various venues where Jamal has performed include Carnegie Hall in New York City and the Montreal Jazz Festival, as well as New York's Blue Note Jazz Club and similar more intimate settings. Ahmad Jamal continued to record and tour throughout the world in the first decade of the 21st century.

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### jazz

Muslim Americans have made notable contributions to the fields of ART, literature, and MUSIC. The world of jazz is no exception. Jazz's own debt to secular blues idioms and

Christian slave spirituals has been well studied. While jazz has absorbed many different religious and cultural influences in its history, jazz musicians themselves began converting to Islam mostly in the years immediately following WORLD WAR II. The prophetic Ahmadiyya Movement, a messianic and reform movement centered around Indian mujahaddid Hazrat Ahmad Ghulam that originated in India in the 19th century, became the primary vehicle bringing African-American musicians to Islam at this time. Many of these jazz musicians had already had musical training from youthful involvement with African-American Christian churches.

The Ahmadiyya Movement appealed especially to those who had been historically and culturally disenfranchised. For African Americans, especially those who as soldiers in World War II had experienced the relative racial calm of Allied Europe in the early 1940s, returning home to Jim Crow laws was a rude awakening. Some, like percussionist Kenny Clarke (who changed his name in 1946 to Liaquat Ali Salaam) and Rudy Powell, sought a way out of the "Black v. White" race laws by converting to Islam and identifying primarily as members of the worldwide ummah rather than as Christian Americans.

Converts to Ahmadiyya, such as percussionist ART BLAKEY, formed enduring musical groups that continued to incubate talent. Originally starting as an all-Muslim group in 1949, Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers developed a reputation for extensive touring, often incorporating musical and cultural influences from Africa. Blakey also developed a penchant for releasing albums and songs under his Muslim name, Abdallah ibn Buhaina. As global musicians became aware of American jazz and Islam, some of them were inspired to embrace both. The pianist Abdullah Ibrahim, based in South Africa, formed a group inspired by Blakey's Messengers, the Jazz Epistles.

The Jazz Messengers nurtured some of most talented jazz musicians in the latter half of the 20th century and also spread the message of Islam. One of its most prominent graduates, YUSEF LATEEF, best known for his musical efforts in the 1950s, converted to Ahmadiyya after a year of study in 1948. As a member of the Messengers in the late 1940s, Lateef also studied religion at Blakey's house, which was the local center of Ahmadiyya worship at the time. Other Muslim musicians, such as Sahib Shihab, were also members of Blakey's band after participating in the prewar era's big bands. Even as late as the 1970s, the Messengers would introduce Wynton Marsalis to the jazz world. Marsalis later became one of the most popular figures in jazz. In his rise to stardom, Marsalis never forgot the contributions of Blakey to jazz or the contributions of Islam to the religious culture of African Americans. In his 1996 album, *In This House, On This Morning*, Marsalis included a piece celebrating Islamic devo-

tion and the Islamic *adhan*, or call to PRAYER, on an album otherwise mostly devoted to African-American Christianity. Marsalis, in turn, brought the attention of the jazz world to both the slave experiences of African Americans and Muslim musicians in his own band.

The roots of jazz can be found in blues music and the spirituals of African-American slaves in the 19th century. Just as slave religion often consisted of a complex mixture of Christian, Islamic, and indigenous African elements, so too, did the music that grew from those seeds. As musicians in the 1950s and 1960s began to explore other musical and ideological styles, Islam again became one more important religious influence. One of the most significant milestones in jazz recording, John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* (1964), was composed and performed as a sacred devotional to God. In poetic accompaniment found in the liner notes, Coltrane clearly uses prophetic language influenced by the Qur'an and prophetic Christianity. Coltrane used the language of many different religious traditions to express spiritual power, and Islam played a prominent role. His first wife, Naima, was a practicing Muslim, as was his piano accompanist and close collaborator, MCCOY TYNER. Tyner in particular served as Coltrane's musical interlocutor in his discussions and investigations of Islam. After Coltrane's death in 1967, Tyner released his own spiritually informed music, especially his 1973 double-album set, *Enlightenment*. Other musical protégés of Coltrane, such as Pharoah Sanders, continued to showcase the ability of music and Islamic devotion to express desire for political and spiritual change. Sanders's 1969 album, *Jewels of Thought*, would showcase an extensive chant for peace, "Hum-Allah-Hum-Allah-Hum-Allah."

Sanders's talent was complemented by Muslim Americans such as Idris Muhammad, who has worked as a percussionist with Sanders and noted pianist AHMAD JAMAL. Sanders also collaborated with Muslim musicians in the global community of Muslims, including Mahmoud Guinia, introducing their talent to the American jazz scene. Idris Muhammad, by contrast, focused on more commercially crossover jazz fused with elements of soul, funk, and rhythm and blues. Through the album artwork, music, and dress of Muhammad and others, musical audiences in the United States have been exposed to a variety of cultural styles and expressions present in the Muslim-American community. Other American musicians, such as Idrees Sulieman and Sahib Shihab, made their primary mark in the swing bands of World War II and the bop era of the 1950s before joining a significant expatriate European jazz scene in the 1960s.

For the most part, Muslim jazz musicians in the United States have not felt the need to adopt classical Islamic music or its motifs. Rather, they have worked to define their own relationship between Islam and music. Robert Stewart, who first gained prominence working on a Pulitzer Prize-win-

ning jazz opera, *Blood on the Fields* (1997), continues to show the influence of religious power to shape jazz music. With playing inspired by Coltrane, Stewart released an album entitled *The Force* in 2005, referring to both the power and the prominence of the "God-force" in human life. The artwork and Islamic calligraphy accompanying the work, combined with the music, transform it into a mobile sacred space. The album is theologically centered on crucial elements of Islam, such as the nature of peace and spiritual warfare, final judgment, Qur'anic revelation, and the Kaba, the "sacred house" in Mecca toward which Muslims make their prayers.

Historically speaking, the influence of Islam in the musical structures of American jazz artists has been more subtle. Art Blakey chose to associate African rhythmic motifs with his Islamic identity. Yusef Lateef adopted common musical signals often generally associated with Middle Eastern music, as well as occasionally using cover art that reinforced exotic themes. In the case of Blakey and Lateef, jazz audiences were made aware of performer's religiosity by the liner notes and essays written for the album. Occasionally, Muslim jazz artists accentuated existing jazz styles, instrumentation, and structures with instruments, of Middle Eastern or South Asian origin, such as the *argol* and the *rabat*. Other innovations have included music based on scales and intervals found in these cultures.

By the turn of the 21st century, Muslim Americans had established themselves as a major influence both within the jazz world and in the larger arena of religious music in the United States. Through a willingness to practice Islam openly and be identified as Muslims during the racial tensions of the cold war, as well as innovations in musical instrumentation and architecture, Muslim musicians testified to the power of religion in music, incorporating global influences far before the genre of "world music" was coined. Moreover, just as Islam's influence in the antebellum era affected the wider development of African-American religion, Muslim musicians in the United States continue to inspire other musicians in the worldwide community of Muslims to utilize jazz as a means of artistic and political expression.

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### Suggested Listening

Ahmad Jamal Live at Pershing Lounge: *But Not For Me* (1958). Chess, CD, 2000.

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The Very Best of Abdullah Ibrahim (2000). Music Club, CD, 2000.

### Dizzy Gillespie on Muslim Jazz Artists (1979)

Jazz artist Dizzy Gillespie (1917–93), whose name is synonymous with the formation of modern jazz, bebop, and Afro-Cuban jazz, wrote in his 1979 autobiography, *To Be or Not to Bop*, that he never converted to Islam. But he was present at the birth of Islam's rising popularity among African-American jazz artists during and after World War II (1941–45). The excerpt from his autobiography reproduced below describes the circumstances in which various jazzmen converted to Islam. Gillespie presented his Muslim jazz colleagues as African Americans looking for an ethnic identity that would help them achieve racial equality. According to him, their embrace of Islam was an attempt to escape the stigma of being black, though he also admitted that some of his Muslim colleagues seemed to be both astute businessmen and sincere believers. Gillespie explained his own decision not to convert in terms of his dislike of polygamy, which he thought—wrongly, it turns out—was a central component of Islamic practice. Whatever Gillespie's personal views of Islam, his recollections paint a vibrant picture of Muslim jazz musicians in the 1940s.



For social and religious reasons, a large number of modern jazz musicians did begin to turn toward Islam during the forties, a movement completely in line with the idea of freedom of religion.

Rudy Powell, from Edgar Hayes's band, became one of the first jazz musicians I knew to accept Islam; he became an Ahmadiyyah Muslim. Other musicians followed, it seemed to me, for social

rather than religious reasons, if you can separate the two.

"Man, if you join the Muslim faith, you ain't colored no more, you'll be white," they'd say. "You get a new name and you don't have to be a nigger no more." So everybody started joining because they considered it a big advantage not to be black during the time of segregation. I thought of joining, but it occurred to me that a lot of them spooks were simply trying to be anything other than a spook at that time. They had no idea of black consciousness; all they were trying to do was escape the stigma of being "colored." When these cats found out the Idrees Sulieman, who joined the Muslim faith about that time, could go into these white restaurants and bring out sandwiches to the other guys because he wasn't colored—he looked like the inside of the chimney—they started enrolling in droves.

Musicians started having it printed on their police cards where it said "race," "W" for white. Kenny Clarke had one and he showed it to me. He said, "See, nigger, I ain't no spook; I'm white, 'W.'" He changed his name to Arabic, Liaqat Ali Salaam. Another cat who had been my roommate at Laurinburg, Oliver Mesheux, got involved in an altercation about race down in Delaware. He went into this restaurant, and they didn't serve colored in there. So he said, "I don't blame you. But I don't have to go under the rules of colored because my name is Mustafa Dalil."

Didn't ask him no more questions. "How do you do?" the guy said.

When I first applied for my police card, I knew what the guys were doing, but not being a Muslim, I wouldn't allow the police to type anything in that spot under race. I wouldn't reply to the race question on the application blank. When the cop started to type something in there, I asked him, "What are you gonna put down there, C for me?"

"You're colored, ain't you?"

"Colored . . . ? No."

"Well, what are you, white?"

"No, don't put nothing on there," I said. "Just give me the card." They left it open. I wouldn't let them type me in W for white nor C for colored; just made them leave it blank. WC is a toilet in Europe.

As time went on, I kept considering converting to Islam but mostly because of the social reasons. I didn't know very much about the religion, but I could dig the idea that Muhammad was a

prophet. I believed that, and there were very few Christians who believed that Muhammad had the word of God with him. The idea of polygamous marriage in Islam, I didn't care for too much. In our society, a man can only take care of one woman. If he does a good job of that, he'll be doing well. Polygamy had its place in the society for which it was intended, as a social custom, but social orders change and each age develops its own mores. Polygamy was acceptable during one part of our development, but most women wouldn't accept that today. People worry about all the women with no husbands, and I don't have any answer for that. Whatever happens, the question should be resolved legitimately and in the way necessary for the advancement of society.

The movement among jazz musicians toward Islam created quite a stir, especially with the surge of the Zionist movement for creation and establishment of the State of Israel. A lot of friction arose between Jews and Muslims, which took the form of a semiboycott in New York of jazz musicians with Muslim names. Maybe a Jewish guy, in a booking agency that Muslim musicians worked from, would throw work another way instead of throwing to the Muslim. Also, many of the agents couldn't pull the same tricks on Muslims that they pulled on the rest of us. The Muslims received knowledge about themselves that we didn't have and that we had no access to; so therefore they tended to act differently toward the people running the entertainment business. Much of the entertainment business was run by Jews. Generally, the Muslims fared well in spite of that, because though we had some who were Muslim in name only, others really had knowledge and were taking care of business.

Near the end of the forties, the newspapers really got worried about whether I'd convert to Islam. In 1948 *Life* magazine published a big picture story, supposedly about our music. They conned me into allowing them to photograph me down on my knees, arms outstretched, supposedly bowing to Mecca. It turned out to be a trick bag. It's one of the few things in my whole career I'm ashamed of, because I wasn't a Muslim. They tricked me into committing a sacrilege. The newspapers figured that if the "king of bebop" converted, thousands of beboppers would follow suit, and reporters questioned me about whether I planned to quit and forsake Christianity. But that lesson from *Life* taught me to leave them hanging.

I told them that on my trips through the South, the members of my band were denied the right of worshiping in churches of their own faith because colored folks couldn't pray with white folks down there. "Don't say I'm forsaking Christianity," I said, "because Christianity is forsaking me—or better, people who claim to be Christian just ain't. It says in the Bible to love thy brother, but people don't practice what the Bible preaches. In Islam, there is no color line. Everybody is treated like equals."

With one reporter, since I didn't know much about the Muslim faith, I called on our saxophonist, formerly named Bill Evans, who'd recently accepted Islam to give this reporter some accurate information.

"What's your new name?" I asked him.

"Yusef Abdul Lateef," he replied. Yusef Lateef told us how a Muslim missionary, Kahlil Ahmed Nasir, had converted many modern jazz musicians in New York to Islam and how he read the Quran daily and strictly observed the prayer and dietary regulations of the religion. I told the reporter that I'd been studying the Quran myself, and although I hadn't converted yet, I knew one couldn't drink alcohol or eat pork as a Muslim. Also I said I felt quite intrigued by the beautiful sound of the word "Quran," and found it "out of this world," "way out," as we used to say. The guy went back to his paper and reported that Dizzy Gillespie and his "beboppers" were "way out" on the subject of religion. He tried to ridicule us as being too strange, weird, and exotic to merit serious attention. Most of the Muslim guys who were sincere in the beginning went on believing and practicing the faith.



Source: Dizzy Gillespie with Al Fraser. *To Be or Not to Bop*. Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1979, 291–293.

## Jesus

Because Christianity has been the dominant religion in the United States, many Muslims have articulated a Muslim relationship to the American mainstream by advocating a Muslim understanding of Jesus. Many Islamic teachings about Jesus parallel those of Christianity, stating that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, that he performed miracles, and that he will return at the end of time. As depicted in the QUR'AN, however, Jesus was not God incarnate but a prophet, meaning that he preached the unity of God, the fundamental message



of Islam. In addition, the Qur'an teaches that Jesus did not die during his crucifixion but was lifted to the heavens to join God. Jesus has served as a bridge between Muslims and Christians in interfaith dialogue, but Muslims have also used an alternate interpretation of Jesus to express dissent from Anglo-American Protestant-American culture.

### JESUS IN THE COLONIAL AND ANTEBELLUM PERIODS

While the lives of the majority of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES remain obscure, two men, JOB BEN SOLOMON (1701–33) and ABDUL-RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (1762–1829), became causes célèbres in America and Europe by presenting themselves as captured princes. Their identity as Muslims, including their literacy in ARABIC, caught the attention and sponsorship of prominent Americans. Ibrahima found a champion in President John Quincy Adams, while Job enlisted the help of James Oglethorpe, founder of the colony of Georgia and member of the British Parliament. Both men eventually returned to Africa with the help of many on both sides of the Atlantic.

Seeking support in a predominantly Christian society, Ibrahima and Job nevertheless criticized Christian interpretations of Jesus. Presented with an Arabic translation of the New Testament by some of his English benefactors, for instance, Job refused to convert to Christianity. Instead, he used the New Testament to support his interpretation of Islamic monotheism, the belief in one God. He denied the divinity of Jesus, noting correctly that the gospels never describe God as a Trinity (that is, as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—with one essence). He also condemned Roman Catholic statues of Jesus, Mary, and the saints as idolatry. Ibrahima likewise refused to become a Christian, criticizing Christian Americans for betraying the teachings of Christ by holding slaves.

This refusal to convert to Christianity may appear to have been risky since both Ibrahim and Job depended on Christian goodwill for their freedom. Yet these critiques of Christianity actually helped to position both men as educated, exotic, and distinct from other enslaved Africans. By articulating a Muslim interpretation of the central figure of the Christian religion, Ibrahima and Job asserted equality with Christian Europeans at a time when Christian missionaries were attempting to “civilize” and evangelize Africans. Besides turning the tables on Christian missionaries, these critiques carried credibility because they echoed criticisms that some educated Christians were already leveling at Christian doctrine.

In the 18th century, many educated people on both sides of the Atlantic embraced Deism, a theology that stressed a single divine architect who established an orderly natural world governed by immutable scientific laws. Deists accepted

the moral teachings of Jesus but dismissed such doctrines as the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus as incompatible with reason. Like Protestants in general, they also condemned Catholic veneration of saints as superstition. When Job condemned the veneration of saints or criticized the doctrine of the Trinity, Deists heard their own criticism of Christian traditions from an apparently independent source. Deists also argued that the original religion of humankind included a simple, rational monotheism, which had been obscured by centuries of superstition. It followed that “primitive” people such as Job would be closer to this natural philosophy than those corrupted by too much civilization.

Ibrahima's criticism of slavery as an affront to the gentle teachings of Jesus likewise played to the discomfort that some Christians on both sides of the Atlantic felt about slavery. The period in which Ibrahima was enslaved was also one in which the abolition movement was growing, particularly among Quakers. Christian abolitionists recognized their own arguments in Ibrahima's assertion that slavery was incompatible with the teachings of Jesus.

### THE LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY JESUS OF LIBERAL ISLAM

In 1888, when most Americans considered Islam an exotic, Eastern religion, journalist ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB (1846–1916) converted to Islam. The most prominent spokesman for Islam in America, Webb both lectured and wrote to spread the faith. Like Ibrahima and Job before him, Webb offered a Muslim interpretation of Jesus that resonated with the liberal Christian theology of his time. Liberals of many Christian denominations accepted historical criticism of the Bible, which attempted to differentiate the historical Jesus from later Christian beliefs about the divine Christ. Liberals also argued that the moral insights of “religion” transcended any particular religion; they were open to tolerance and dialogue, especially with the religions of the East. Webb, having experimented with Buddhism before accepting Islam, exemplified this curiosity about Eastern religions. Webb's version of the Muslim Jesus as a prophet of ethical monotheism misunderstood by his own followers resonated with liberal Christian theology.

Jesus, according to Webb, had preached the belief in one God, the only true and original religion of humankind. Webb argued that Jesus had never advocated the doctrine of the Trinity nor believed in his own divinity. Webb blamed Paul, whose letters to the early churches form an important part of the Christian New Testament, for falsely elevating Jesus to divinity; but he also implied that Jesus himself had died before he could establish a religious structure that would maintain his followers in the true faith. Webb compared Muhammad to Jesus, noting that both had been persecuted. Unlike Jesus, Webb argued, Muhammad had established a community that

preserved true monotheism; Webb represented Muhammad as completing and fulfilling the work that Jesus had left only partly done.

In these arguments, Jesus served as a bridge between Christianity and Islam. By embracing Jesus as an apostle of Islam, however, Webb also implied that the followers of Jesus had gone astray. At a time when Christians asserted that Islam had spread by the sword, Webb insisted Christians had been more violent than Muslims. Pointing to the Crusades, he asserted a pattern of Christian aggression in defiance of the gentle teachings of Jesus. Noting that Jesus' own disciples had not understood his message (a theme in the Gospel of Mark), Webb implied that the followers of Jesus had begun to depart from his true message almost immediately after the Crucifixion and that their violence over the centuries testified to their errors. By placing Jesus in a Muslim framework, Webb made Jesus a point of dissent from Christianity.

### BLACK MUSLIM VIEWS OF JESUS

In the middle of the 20th century, some American politicians began to describe the United States as a "Judeo-Christian" nation, rather than a Protestant or Christian nation. While this interpretation of U.S. national identity became part of political rhetoric during WORLD WAR II, it was later recognized in Will Herberg's 1955 sociological study *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*. "Judeo-Christian," a term that embraced Jews and Catholics who had arrived in large numbers at the end of the 19th century, did not acknowledge a small but growing Muslim presence, especially among African Americans.

For African Americans, still excluded from full citizenship by racist attitudes and laws, Islam represented dissent from the national consensus. Islam offered a path to recapturing what many saw as the original religion of their enslaved ancestors. Perhaps more important, Islam offered a sophisticated alternative to Christianity, which, for some African Americans, had become tainted by the history of Christian justifications of slavery, racism, and colonialism. In the decades after 1945, Islam also provided a link to the successful anticolonial movements in the Middle East and North Africa. Claiming Jesus for Islam allowed African Americans to present Christianity as a kind of colonial power, which had obscured the native truth of Islam with a false ideology that upheld European or white power.

Members of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), founded in the 1930s, regarded the debunking of Christian teaching about Jesus as a necessary component of liberating African Americans from the false ideology of white racism. Longtime NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) employed Jesus in a radical assault on the ideology of white supremacy. In a complex mythology, Elijah Muhammad portrayed NOI founder W. D. FARD (ca. 1877–ca. 1934) as the divine savior of black people. Fard paralleled Jesus, who, in Muhammad's

telling of the story, had appeared as a black messiah to the corrupt and savage white race.

As in Sunni Islamic accounts of Jesus, Elijah Muhammad's Jesus preached the original religion of humankind; that is, Jesus was a Muslim, preaching a message of human equality and peace. Jesus was not divine, nor was he miraculously born of a virgin. According to Elijah Muhammad, Jesus built the city of Jerusalem as a sanctuary for his followers, but those whites who resisted redemption put a price on his head. Jews turned him over to bounty hunters, who murdered him by pinning him to the wall with a knife. Thus, in Muhammad's account, Jesus was fixed to a wall in a posture suggesting crucifixion but was not actually crucified, as usually portrayed in Christian iconography.

Following the death of Jesus, in this account, his enemies conspired to promulgate the lies on which Christianity was founded: that Jesus rose from the dead; that he was the Son of God; and also that his birth took place on December 25. According to NOI teachings, centuries later Christians ultimately conquered the Americas, where they transported and enslaved the "Black Nation" (that is, all people of color).

As this account of the origins of Christianity suggests, Jesus played a complex role in the worldview of the NOI. On the one hand, Muhammad's account deflated the importance of Jesus, rendering him as human. Further, Muhammad accused Christianity of enslaving the Black Nation mentally, keeping its members in the thrall of a white "spook" God who claimed to have risen from a tomb. On the other hand, the true Jesus preached genuine Islam, serving as a model for future prophets and redeemers. In the mid-1960s, Elijah Muhammad compared himself both to Moses and to Jesus. Articles in *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, the NOI newspaper, cited parallels between Elijah Muhammad and Jesus as persecuted messengers of God.

During this period, Daoud Ahmed Faisal, an African-American missionary who promoted Islam in NEW YORK CITY, likewise argued that African Americans would be liberated by knowledge of Islam and the true nature of Jesus. Unlike the leaders of the NOI, Faisal adhered to Sunni ISLAMIC THOUGHT. Like NOI spokesmen, however, he argued that white Christians had deliberately concealed the true nature of Jesus to dominate African Americans.

In *Al-Islam: The Religion of Humanity* (1950), Faisal asserted that the true religion of Jesus had been Islam. As a consequence, he argued, those who worshipped Jesus as a god or as the Son of God would be condemned to Hell. Faisal's vehemence arose from his conviction that Christianity supported white racism. According to Faisal, Christianity was not a religion at all but a mere "social order" and philosophy devoted to "white supremacy." By contrast, Faisal argued, true Islam promoted both peace and universal brotherhood.

### MEANINGS OF JESUS IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

There was a resurgence of interest in mystical and “Eastern” religions in the United States in the late 1960s and 1970s, including the Islamic mystical tradition of Sufism. Sufism, which had been present in the United States since it was introduced by the Indian teacher INAYAT KHAN (1882–1927), emphasizes the absolute love of God, even to the point of becoming lost in the Beloved. Whereas most Muslim Americans relied on the Qur’an and Sunna, or Tradition, of the prophet Muhammad to support their interpretation of Jesus, Sufis also accessed a rich body of mystical literature, especially the poetry of the medieval Persian poet Rumi (Mawlana Jala al-Din Muhammad Balkhi, 1207–73), to portray Jesus as the ideal Sufi master.

For instance, Javad Nurbakhsh, who founded the NIMATULLAHI SUFI ORDER with branches in New York, Washington, San Francisco, and other major American cities in the 1970s, collected centuries of Sufi traditions in *Jesus in the Eyes of the Sufis* (1983). These traditions present Jesus as a wandering prophet preaching love of God, capable of miraculous healing and profound spiritual insight, a perfect Sufi master and seal of the prophets to the Hebrews.

Inayat Khan’s son, VILAYAT KHAN (1916–2004), a British citizen influential among American Sufis, also described Jesus as a manifestation of God in human, vulnerable form. From this perspective Jesus was the ultimate Sufi master, a rebel against the legalism—an interpretation of religion that stressed religious laws rather than spirituality—of his time. According to Khan, Jesus was not uniquely God incarnate but a mystic who realized that God (or the Universe, Khan’s preferred term) exists within us all. This interpretation of Jesus, which drew parallels to Jesus as the Hindu god Krishna, presented Jesus as the point at which mystical faiths unite. Sufi representations of Jesus invited a dialogue among many religions, but that dialogue has been generally limited to those attracted to mysticism.

After the terrorist attacks on SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, many Muslims felt a need to join a broader religious dialogue in the aftermath of the anti-Muslim backlash that followed. Interfaith dialogue, a respectful conversation in which members of different religions attempt to reach mutual understanding, offered Muslims the opportunity to refute prejudice against Islam. INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS, often centered on college campuses, have tended to attract religious liberals or others who distrust religious exclusivism. In this context, both Muslims and Christians have suggested that Jesus may serve as a bridge between their two religions. To form that bridge, the Christian partners in dialogue generally emphasized the humanity of Jesus or his status as a revelation of God’s love. The Muslim partners emphasized reverence for the moral and spiritual teachings of Jesus.

Muhammad Shafiq and Mohammed Abu-Nimer’s “Interfaith Dialogue: A Guide for Muslims” (2007), a pamphlet published by the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT, notably, recommends that Muslims leave the characterization of Jesus to Christians, stressing instead the common roots of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in Abraham. Christian partners in dialogue such as Marston Speight, a professor at Hartford Divinity School, have argued in turn that Jesus summarized the insights of all religions—including both Islam and Christianity—in the Sermon on the Mount. In *God Is One: The Way of Islam* (2001), Speight portrayed Islam and Christianity as alternate interpretations of the single truth grounded in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humanity.

On a more popular level, Ranya Idliby, Suzanne Oliver, and Pricilla Warner—a Muslim, Christian, and Jew, respectively—have recounted their informal dialogue in *The Faith Club: A Muslim, A Christian, A Jew—Three Women Search for Understanding* (2001), a project that included an online guide to creating interfaith dialogue in any community. All three women expressed their admiration for the Jesus of the Sermon on the Mount, setting aside the differences in their various traditions.

### CONCLUSION

For Muslims in the United States, Jesus has served both as a rallying point for dissent from the Christian mainstream and as the sign that Islam is morally and ethically already part of mainstream America. Though religious doctrine has been important to Muslim-American understandings of Jesus, the historical contexts in which Muslim Americans have articulated their views of Jesus in public dialogue have been equally influential. How Muslim Americans discuss Jesus, in other words, seems to be a product partly of how Christian and other non-Muslim Americans approach the presence of a Muslim minority in the United States.

When, for example, Christian missionaries attempted to convert educated Muslim slaves to Christianity, the slaves used the Christian scriptures to argue for their own Muslim view of Jesus. A similar form of resistance can be seen in early 20th-century African-American Muslim understandings of Jesus. Suffering from legal and extra-discrimination often at the hands of white Christian Americans, African-American Muslims of various religious orientations accused whites of distorting the true meaning of Jesus, using him to justify their prejudices.

At the same time, for more than a century, Muslim Americans of various religious orientations and ethnic backgrounds have also embraced Jesus as a bridge between themselves and non-Muslim Americans. In 1893, Alexander Russell Webb noted Islam’s respect for Jesus as something shared by Muslims and Christians alike. Later, Muslim Americans involved in Sufi movements and interfaith



dialogues also saw Jesus as a shared heritage. If Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, and other participants in interfaith dialogues still disagreed over theological doctrines about the nature of Jesus, they often came to widespread agreement over the ethical messages of Jesus, especially regarding his teachings regarding poverty, peace, love, and other liberal values.

Sonja Spear

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**Jewish-Muslim dialogue** See INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS.

### Job Ben Solomon (ca. 1701–ca. 1773) colonial-era religious scholar

Job Ben Solomon's name is an anglicization of "Hyuba, Boon Salumena Jallo" or "Job, Son of Solomon, of Fulbe," but he is referred to in most historical materials merely as "Job." Job

lived in the American colony of Maryland for just under three years (1730–33), but during that short time, he became the most famous of the literate Muslims brought by force from Africa to the Thirteen Colonies. The fact that he managed to return to Africa as a free man of means, leaving behind a published record of his enslavement, qualifies Job as part of an even more select company. Job's story demonstrates the firmness of his Muslim faith and the empowering nature of his religious convictions, with which he impressed both captors and benefactors.

Born in the West African town of Boonda (or Bundu) around 1701 or 1702, Job inherited the vocation of imam, or Muslim cleric, from his father, Solomon. Job was raised as a companion and classmate of Sambo, whose father was the ruler of the region, and both boys studied the QUR'AN and learned ARABIC from Job's father. At around age 15, Job married his first wife, whose name is not known, and she bore him three sons: Abdolah, Hibrahim, and Sambo (Bluett's spellings). Around 1728, he married a second wife, and they had one daughter, Fatima. In 1730, Solomon sent Job, then nearly 30 years old, to sell two African slaves to English traders at a Gambia River port, but Job was captured by a rival tribe and wound up on a slave ship himself. The ship landed at Annapolis, Maryland, about a month later, and Job was soon put to work planting tobacco on nearby Kent Island.



Born in Senegal about 1701, Job Ben Solomon (left), or Hyuba, Boon Salumena Jallo, lived in Maryland as a slave from 1730 until 1733, when James Oglethorpe purchased his freedom and sponsored his voyage to England. He returned to his native Senegal about 1734. (Schomburg Center/Art Resource, New York, NY)



After he withered under grueling fieldwork, Job was reassigned to help tend cattle. From this occupation he was able to steal away into nearby woods to pray, but his devotions were often interrupted by a “white Boy” who threw dirt in his face. After running away from the plantation, Job was captured and returned to his master, but in his determination to regain his freedom, he wrote a letter to his father in Arabic. The letter never reached Solomon, but it did come to the attention of James Oglethorpe, a British philanthropist and founding member of the colony of Georgia. Impressed by the intelligence of this literate slave, Oglethorpe offered his personal bond to secure Job’s freedom, and in March 1733, Job was placed on a ship bound for England, with recommendations from several Annapolis ministers and lawyers.

Thomas Bluett happened to be onboard the same ship, the *William*, and during their monthlong passage, he endeavored to teach Job English. Bluett later wrote that “by the Time that we arrived in *England* . . . he was able to understand most of what we said in common Conversation; and we . . . [could] understand him tolerably well.” Bluett also remarked that Job “was very constant in his Devotions,” never consumed pork or alcohol, and demonstrated “solid judgment, a ready Memory, and a clear Head.” Once in England, Bluett served as an advocate for Job, and through his assistance Job procured sufficient funds to repay Oglethorpe’s bond and to finance his return trip to Africa. He was also supplied for the voyage with a gold watch, an unspecified sum of British currency, and an extensive set of farming tools with which Bluett hoped he might “remove” many of the “Difficulties” under which African farmers were believed to labor.

In July 1733, Job left England onboard a ship belonging to the Royal African Company (RAC). He arrived safely back at his Gambia River port and became a commercial agent for English traders. In 1734, Bluett published *Some Memoirs of the Life of Job*, which he dedicated to the Duke of Montague, one of Job’s most generous supporters. Several years later, the RAC officer Francis Moore recorded his favorable impressions of Job in his *Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa* (1738), which supplies the last surviving record of this remarkable individual. After returning home, having been gone only three years, Job found all his children alive and well. He apparently maintained contact with his business partners in England for several years, but details about his life after 1740 are scarce. One report suggests he died in 1773. According to historian Allan Austin, Job’s biography is the first record of the life of a sub-Saharan African in a European language and should (perhaps) be recognized as “the first text in African American literature.” Job’s narrative also represents one of the earliest records in the rich history of Muslims in the Americas.

Patrick E. Horn

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### Memoirs of Job, Son of Solomon (1734)

*Job Ben Solomon (ca. 1701–1773), also known as Hyuba, Boon Salumena Jallo, spent three years as a slave in the British colony of Maryland before traveling to England and then back to Africa. Captured in Gambia in 1730, this educated and elite West African Muslim was transported on the Middle Passage to America and first assigned to work the tobacco fields in Kent Island, Maryland. After becoming sick at this job, however, he was allowed to herd cattle. But Job was not destined to remain a slave for long. His Arabic literacy and life story attracted attention from several prominent Britons, including James Oglethorpe, a member of Parliament and later founder of Georgia. Sponsored by Oglethorpe, Job traveled with lawyer Thomas Bluett to England in 1733, where he met the royal family and secured his passage back to his native Africa in 1734. His biography, written by Bluett, describes Job’s life in America and his voyage to England. The excerpt below stresses Job’s determination to keep his prayers and other aspects of his Islamic religious practice, despite the difficulties of doing so both on land and at sea. It begins when Job was still a cow herder.*



Job would often leave the cattle, and withdraw into the woods to pray; but a white boy frequently watched him, and whilst he was at his devotion would mock him, and throw dirt in his face. This very much disturbed Job, and added to his other misfortunes; all which were increased by his ignorance of the English language, which prevented his complaining, or telling his case to any person about him. Grown in some measure desperate, by reason of his present hardships, he resolved to travel at a venture; thinking he might possibly be taken up by some master, who would use him better, or otherwise meet with

some lucky accident, to divert or abate his grief. Accordingly, he traveled through the woods, till he came to the county of Kent, upon Delaware Bay, now esteemed Part of Pennsylvania; although it is properly a part of Maryland, and belongs to my Lord Baltimore. There is a law in force, throughout the colonies of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania . . . as far as Boston in New England . . . that any Negro, or white servant who is not known in the county, or has no pass, may be secured by any person, and kept in the common jail, till the master of such servant shall fetch him. Therefore Job being able to give no account of himself, was put in prison there.

This happened about the beginning of June, 1731, when I, who was attending the courts there, and had heard of Job, went with several gentlemen to the jailor's house, being a tavern, and desired to see him. He was brought into the tavern to us, but could not speak one word of English. Upon our talking and making signs to him, he wrote a Line or two before us, and when he read it, pronounced the words Allah and Muhammad; by which, and his refusing a glass of wine we offered him, we perceived he was a Mahometan [Muslim], but could not imagine of what country he was, or how he got thither; for by his affable carriage, and the easy composure of his countenance, we could perceive he was no common slave.

When Job had been some time confined, an old Negro man, who lived in that neighborhood, and could speak the Wolof language, which Job also understood, went to him, and conversed with him. By this Negro the keeper was informed to whom Job belonged, and what was the cause of his leaving his master. The keeper thereupon wrote to his master, who soon after fetched him home, and was much kinder to him than before; allowing him a place to pray in, and some other conveniences, in order to make his slavery as easy as possible.

Yet slavery and confinement was by no means agreeable to Job, who had never been used to it; he therefore wrote a letter in Arabic to his father, acquainting him with his misfortunes, hoping he might yet find means to redeem him. . . . It happened that this letter was seen by James Oglethorpe, Esquire; who, according to his usual goodness and generosity, took compassion on Job, and gave his bond to Mr. Hunt for the payment of a certain sum, upon the delivery of Job here in England. . . .

He lived some time with Mr. Denton at Annapolis before any ship could stir out upon account of the ice that lay in all the rivers of Maryland at that time. In this interval he became acquainted with the Reverend Mr. Henderson, a gentleman of great learning, minister of Annapolis, and commissary to the Bishop of London, who gave Job the character of a person of great piety and learning; and indeed his good nature and affability gained him many friends besides in that place.

In March, 1733, he set sail in the *William*, Captain George Uriel, Commander; in which ship I was also a passenger. The character which the captain and I had of him at Annapolis induced us to teach him as much of the English language as we could, he being then able to speak but few words of it, and those hardly intelligible. This we set about as soon as we were out at sea, and in about a fortnight's time taught him all his letters, and to spell almost any single syllable, when distinctly pronounced to him; but Job and myself falling sick, we were hindered from making any greater progress at that time. However, by the time that we arrived in England, which was the latter end of April, 1733, he had learned so much of our language, that he was able to understand most of what we said in common conversation; and we that were used to his manner of speaking, could make shift to understand him tolerably well.

During the voyage, he was very constant in his devotions; which he never omitted, on any pretence, notwithstanding we had exceeding bad weather all the time we were at sea. We often permitted him to kill our fresh stock, that he might eat of it himself; for he eats no flesh, unless he has killed the animal with his own hands, or knows that it has been killed by some Mussulman [Muslim]. He has no scruple about fish; but won't touch a bit of pork, it being expressly forbidden by their [Muslims'] law. . . .

It is known he was a Mahometan [Muslim], but more moderate in his sentiments than most of that religion are. He did not believe a sensual paradise nor many other ridiculous and vain traditions, which pass current among the generality of the Turks [the Muslims with whom most Europeans were familiar]. He was very constant in his Devotion to God; but said, he never prayed to Muhammad nor did he think it lawful to address any but God himself in prayer.

He was so fixed in the Belief of one God, that it was not possible, at least during the time he was here, to give him any notion of the Trinity [the Christian doctrine that while God is one, God is also three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit]. So that having had a New Testament given him in his own language, when he had read it, he told me he had perused it with a great deal of care, but could not find one word in it of three Gods, as some people talk: I did not care to puzzle him, and therefore answered in general, that the English believed only

in one God. He showed upon all occasions a singular veneration for the name of God, and never pronounced the Word Allah without a peculiar accent, and a remarkable pause: And indeed his notions of God, Providence, and a future State, were in the main very just and reasonable.



Source: Thomas Bluett. *Some Memoirs of the Life of Job, Son of Solomon*. London: R. Ford, 1734, pp. 19–25, 51–53.



**Kabbani, Muhammad Hisham (1945– )**  
*religious leader*

Muhammad Hisham Kabbani was born in Beirut, Lebanon, on January 25, 1945, into a prominent family of Sunni Muslim scholars who came to be affiliated with a NAQSHBANDI SUFI ORDER represented by the Cypriot Sufi master Muhammad Nazim Adil al-Haqqani. After receiving a university degree in chemistry from the American University of Beirut, Kabbani also pursued medical studies in Louvain, Belgium, and eventually obtained a degree in Islamic jurisprudence in Damascus, Syria. Having traveled with al-Haqqani's retinue as a boy, Kabbani would go on to marry al-Haqqani's daughter and become his deputy in the West.

On the orders of al-Haqqani, Kabbani moved in 1990 from Lebanon to the United States to establish the Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order of America, headquartered in Fenton, Michigan. In addition to the order's main convention and retreat center in Fenton, Kabbani oversaw a network of more than 20 mosques, centers, and retreats located throughout the United States and Canada. The main organs of the Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order of America include the As-Sunnah Foundation of America (ASFA), the Islamic Supreme Council of America (ISCA), and the Kamilat Muslim Women's Organization. An active public speaker, in addition to participating in myriad Islamic, interfaith, outreach, and educational events across the United States and Canada, Kabbani has frequently toured internationally. While he has been a vigorous promoter of the Sufi way of life as prescribed by the Naqshbandi-Haqqani order, much of his public outreach has focused on countering what he deemed to be the enervating effects of prevailing extremist interpretations of Islam on the contemporary Muslim community, both in North America and abroad.

Kabbani has been no stranger to controversy. In 1999, for example, he raised the ire of a coalition of prominent Muslim-American groups for stating, at a U.S. State Department Open Forum entitled "The Evolution of Extremism," that 80 percent of American mosques were run by extremists. He has also drawn negative attention for voicing what many have seen as alarmist, apocalyptic theories unsubstantiated by

Islamic tradition. For example, before the new millennium in 2000, Kabbani predicted that the Dajjal, an evil "deceiver" who will appear, according to some Muslim traditions, before the end of the world, and the Mahdi, the "rightly-guided one" who will rule the world in justice before its end, were alive and would bring about the beginnings of Armageddon starting in 2000.

Though Kabbani's teachings are presented in the garb of SUFISM, the mystical tradition of Islam meant to encourage a more personal relationship with God, they are also firmly grounded in SHARI'AH, or Islamic LAW and ethics. Members of the order comprise a mix of American converts and Muslim-born affiliates from various immigrant communities.

A prolific author, since the early 1990s, Kabbani has published a steady stream of books and pamphlets in English readily found in Islamic and Sufi bookstores, as well as through online retail outlets, including a history of the masters of the Naqshbandi Sufi order, *The Naqshbandi Sufi Way: History and Guidebook of the Saints of the Golden Chain* (1995), and the multivolume *Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine* (1998– ), which serves as a compendium of the order's teachings. His speeches and sermons are also broadcast on the INTERNET, and his Sufi order and its affiliated organizations have an extensive presence in cyberspace. Among Muslim-American Sufi movements, Kabbani's order has proven to be unusually high profile and one of the most popular and fastest growing.

Erik S. Ohlander

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### **Karoub, Hussien (1892–1973) *Midwestern religious leader***

Hussien Karoub served as spiritual leader of the Sunni Muslim community of DETROIT, MICHIGAN, from 1913 until his death in 1973. As the first Muslim religious leader to arrive in the city, Karoub invented the role of imam, or religious leader, in the new context of the United States. He oversaw the marriages of hundreds of couples over a 60-year period, performed funerals in several languages and in over a dozen states, arbitrated family and community disputes, presided over the opening of many mosques, and led Detroit's oldest and best-established congregation for more than 30 years. He also taught ARABIC, the QUR'AN, and Qur'anic exegesis, and was an outspoken advocate of Muslim concerns with public and private officials. He lectured frequently about Islam to university, church, and other audiences, and established several English- and Arabic-language newspapers that promoted the news and concerns of the Muslim-American community in Detroit and across the country.

Born in the Lebanese village of Majdul Anger on December 20, 1892, Hussien Karoub studied Islam briefly as a young apprentice to Sheikh Bader Deen at the Suleimaniyyah Mosque in Damascus, Syria. In 1912, he was encouraged to join his older brother, Mohammed Karoub, in the United States. He settled first in Danbury, Connecticut, but was drawn to Detroit, like other immigrants, in 1913 by the five-dollar workday offered by automobile manufacturer Henry Ford at his Highland Park assembly plant. Karoub worked for the Ford Motor Company for 25 years, building automobiles and tractors. Karoub was married three times and had seven children: Ali (Alex), Amina (Anne), Asma (Helen), Carl, James (Jim), Mohammad (Mike), and Nabiha.

When Karoub first arrived in Michigan, Highland Park and Detroit were already bustling centers of Muslim settlement that included Turkish, Arabic, and Kurdish speakers from the Ottoman Empire; Albanian, Serbo-Croatian, and Polish speakers from Europe; and Persian, Pushtu, Urdu, and Hindu speakers from British India. African Americans also began converting to Islam in the 1920s, and Karoub's home was open to Muslims of any background for guidance, conversation, and religious education.

In 1921, Karoub presided over the opening of the first purpose-built mosque in the United States, the Moslem

Mosque of Highland Park. Intended to provide religious services and educational programs for all of Detroit's Muslim, this Islamic center did not last long. Differences arose over the mosque's financing, the languages spoken there, and Karoub's leadership. Although the majority of the city's Muslims were Sunni, the local Syrian population was majority Shi'a, and the Shi'a preferred to follow one of their own, Kalil Bazy, in prayer.

Following the demise of this institution, Karoub played a pivotal role in the establishment of a mosque in CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, al-Nadi al-Islami (completed in 1934), perhaps the oldest surviving mosque in the United States. He also served as imam of the American Moslem Society (established in Dearborn, Michigan, in 1938), Michigan's oldest Muslim congregation. Karoub was often a special guest at the opening of other mosques in Detroit and across the country, especially in communities where he had served as itinerant or visiting imam from the WORLD WAR I era through the 1960s, before these congregations had the means to procure religious leaders of their own.

Hussien Karoub was also a pioneer in the printing industry. In 1936, he began publishing a bilingual (English and Arabic) magazine entitled *Islamic Unity*. In 1940, this publication became *Al Hayat* (Life), and it evolved eventually into a weekly. Finally, in 1948, he produced the *American Arab Message*, a weekly paper published continuously for more than 25 years. These papers, like Karoub's travels, linked Muslims across the country in the days before national institutions were established to represent their interests and provide for their educational and spiritual needs.

In addition to his obligations at the American Moslem Society, the Ford Motor Company, and Karoub Printing, Karoub officiated at weddings, funerals, holiday celebrations, and other important events in the lives of the city's Muslims, regardless of their ethnic, racial, or sectarian background. He traveled frequently to smaller Muslim settlements as far away as Connecticut, West Virginia, North Dakota, and Alberta, Canada, to provide religious services.

Karoub made the hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, in 1959. In 1962, on the anniversary of his 50th year of service as a Muslim cleric in the United States, he was awarded the Republic of Lebanon's "Order of the Cedar" medal and received special commendations from President John F. Kennedy and from Michigan Governor John Swainson. Hussien Karoub died in September 1973 and is buried in the Muslim section of Roseland Park Cemetery, an institution he helped to establish. His grave is marked by a monument that celebrates his life as a spiritual leader and declares the Reverend Imam Hussien Karoub "Father of Islam in America."

Sally Howell

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### Kasem, Casey (Kamal Amin Kasem) (1932– ) radio announcer, voiceover artist, television host

Casey Kasem's unmistakable voice is familiar to the millions of Americans and others who watch television cartoons and listen to the RADIO. The voice of radio's *American Top 40* and numerous animated characters was born Kamal Amin Kasem on April 27, 1932, in DETROIT, MICHIGAN. His peddler father Amin Kasem arrived in the United States from al-Moukhtara, Lebanon, by way of South America and Mexico. A member of the DRUZE COMMUNITY, Amin married an American Druze woman from Pennsylvania in 1929. The Kasems eventually settled in Detroit, a city with a large Arab-American population.

Casey Kasem attended Northwestern University and Wayne State University, where he studied broadcasting. In 1952, he was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War and served as an announcer for the Armed Forces Radio Network while stationed overseas. After completing his military duty, Kasem embarked on a career in radio, spending time at radio stations in Detroit (WJBK), Buffalo (WBNY), Cleveland, and San Francisco before eventually working at Los Angeles's KRLA in 1963. While announcing at KRLA, Kasem began a second career as a television/motion picture actor and voiceover artist for television cartoons. The films in which Kasem has appeared include *The Girls from Thunder Strip* (1966), *The Glory Stompers* (1968), *The Incredible Two-Headed Transplant* (1971), and *New York, New York* (1977). But it is for his voiceover work that Kasem is better remembered.

In 1969, Kasem created the voice of "Shaggy" on the long-running Saturday morning cartoon *Scooby Doo, Where Are You?* Kasem's voice greatly contributed to the character's unique persona, which has stayed consistent throughout the many seasons and incarnations of the series. In addition, Kasem's voice work has graced other cartoons, such as *Josie and the Pussycats*, *The Chattanooga Cats*, *Hot Wheels*, *Battle of the Planets*, *Batman*, and *The Super Friends*, voicing the character of Robin in the latter two series.

In 1970, Kasem launched his nationally syndicated radio program, *American Top 40*, which aired continuously through 1988, returning to the air once again in 1998. This second run lasted until 2004. *American Top 40* was soon joined by a television version, *America's Top 10*, in 1980. On both programs, Kasem counted down the top pop songs in

the country every week, as well as sending out dedications and dispensing tidbits of music trivia. Kasem was inducted into the National Association of Broadcasters Radio Hall of Fame in 1992.

Kasem has been married twice, first to Linda Myers, the mother of his three oldest children, Mike, Kerri, and Julie. His second and current wife, Jean, gave birth to their daughter, Liberty, on May 31, 1990.

Kasem is a staunch supporter of Arab-American causes, and his principles have sometimes clashed with his livelihood, such as when he quit performing voice work on the television cartoon *Transformers* due to what he considered an unflattering portrayal of Arab culture in an episode. He has declined other work as well because of his moral opposition to the themes promoted.

Jason E. Housley

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### Kathwari, Farooq (1944– ) furniture magnate, philanthropist

Farooq Kathwari is a retail manager, humanitarian, and political activist. President of Ethan Allen Interiors, Inc., a leading furniture distributor, since 1985 and chairman and chief executive officer (CEO) since 1988, Kathwari has also volunteered his expertise to nine nonprofit organizations, including peace groups, foreign relations organizations, and research universities. He has been especially devoted to religious peacemaking and conflict resolution in the Kashmir region between India and Pakistan.

Born on August 16, 1944, in Kashmir, which India and Pakistan have contested since the cessation of British colonial rule of India in 1947, Kathwari was the son of a politically active lawyer. When he was four, his father traveled from the Indian-controlled zone of Kashmir to the Pakistani-controlled zone and was not allowed to return for 18 years. Kathwari's family was reunited in the Indian-controlled zone after a year of separation, but the injustice of the situation later inspired Kathwari in his work as a philanthropist.

Kathwari attended Kashmir University, where he received a bachelor's degree in English literature and political science. In 1965, his father, who was working at the 1965 World's Fair in New York, brought his son to New York University to pursue graduate work. Kathwari received a master's degree in international marketing and worked in the import-export business after graduation. In 1980,

Kathwari's import business began to supply Ethan Allen Interiors, Inc., with native furniture. Taking a job with the company, he worked his way up to become president and, later, chairman and CEO. In 1989, he took the company private. Kathwari reformed the company by charging flat rates for distribution, diversifying the product line, and replacing senior management.

In 1992, Kathwari's son, Irfan, who had traveled to Afghanistan as a mujahideen, or religious fighter, died fighting the Soviet army, which had invaded the country in 1979. Kathwari said that "the loss of my son helped me understand that conflicts are not good. Conflicts need to be resolved. That's a responsibility of leadership." Kathwari targeted his philanthropy toward various international organizations, including the Council of Foreign Relations and Refugees International. Working with these organizations, Kathwari became a prominent spokesman on the Kashmir problem. In 1996, he formed the Kashmir Study Group. In 1998, the group formulated the Livingston Proposal, a framework for peace discussions between India and Pakistan on the disputed region. The original framework suggested the division of Kashmir into sovereign nations; it was updated in 2005.

Kathwari has also been a proponent of Muslims identifying themselves as Americans and has become a prominent spokesman for Muslim-American participation in politics and civic affairs. Kathwari praised the opportunities for Muslim immigrants in the United States, stating, "Fortunately, in America there is more chance to be integrated . . . a proactive engagement makes a lot of sense."

For his humanitarian efforts, Kathwari has received many awards, including the Outstanding American by Choice Award from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Spirit of Asian American Award from the Asian American Federation of New York, and the Islamic Center of Southern California American Muslim Achievement Award for outstanding contributions in his field of work and community.

*Andrew O'Brien*

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### **Kebe, Lamen** (ca. 1767–?) *Muslim-American slave who returned to Africa*

Lamen Kebe was one of hundreds of thousands of Africans brutally enslaved and brought to the United States to work. After 40 years of serving masters in three Southern states, Kebe was freed in the mid-1800s and managed, remarkably, to return to Africa in 1835. Before Kebe left, he was interviewed by the ethnographer and educator Theodore Dwight, Jr., and left a valuable testament about education in his homeland and his own remarkable story.

Kebe was probably born in 1767 in the principality of Futa Jallon (in present-day Guinea) in West Africa. Kebe belonged to a well-off and respected family of the Jakahnke clan. The Jakahnke were Muslim teacher-priests and pacifists who sought converts through preaching faithfulness to the recorded word of God, as well as accommodating local custom as much as possible. Kebe was raised in this tradition and even traveled with a jihadist army, as the Jakahnke sometimes did despite their antimilitarism, seeking to teach in the wake of fighting. At 14, Kebe began his formal education. This lasted seven years and focused mainly on Qur'anic learning, including reading and writing in ARABIC. Kebe explained to Dwight that education was widespread in his homeland, provided for the poor by the government, and sometimes included women, as both teachers and students. Following the completion of his education, Kebe began service as a professional teacher. He married and had three children. In 1795, on a journey to buy paper in the town of Timbo for his students, he was captured, sold into slavery, and began the harrowing journey to the United States.

Little is known about the four decades Kebe spent as a slave in the United States. His masters kept him in Alabama, South Carolina, and Georgia. As an old man in the 1830s, he was set free, though we do not know why. Nor do we know how he made his way to NEW YORK CITY. Kebe would only mention his thanks to his "Christian" master, implying a religious reason. Kebe had not learned English, the language of his masters in his four decades as a slave. Despite his age, he began learning English as fast as he could, to speed his passage back to Africa.

During his year in New York, Kebe was cared for by the American Colonization Society (ACS) and began making appearances at their meetings. The ACS was dedicated to funding former slaves to emigrate to Africa and supporting policy for the creation of Liberia, founded in 1822, to receive them. Dwight was also a member of the ACS, and this is most likely how he came to learn of Kebe. Kebe pleaded his case to be returned to Africa, letting the society know some of his background and that he wanted to return in part to find the wife and three children he had left behind. Besides meeting Dwight, a member of the New York Colonization Society, Kebe became a correspondent of OMAR IBN SAID (1770–1864), who was also

an African-born slave and literate in Arabic. Said was kept on a plantation near Fayetteville, North Carolina, and wrote the only Arabic narrative of slave life in the United States.

At Kebe's second recorded appearance at a colonization meeting in May 1835, he began representing himself as a Christian convert, possibly to help encourage his missionary-minded audience to pay for his trip back to Africa. When Kebe met Dwight in 1835, he was most likely well into his sixties. He was six feet tall, and Dwight described him having a "friendly disposition, and dignified but simple demeanour." Dwight had a dual interest in hearing Kebe's tale of his African life. As an ethnographer, he and others realized that many of the futile, violent expeditions of Europeans into the African heartland for information could be made unnecessary if the African knowledge of slaves in the United States was tapped properly. Realizing that many slaves spoke and even wrote Arabic, he could obtain detailed accounts of African knowledge, from religion to wars, history and education. Ethnographers like Dwight searched far and wide for these slaves. Dwight's interview with Kebe was largely culled for a talk and paper he presented to the American Lyceum, a series of associations set up first in 1826 in New England to promote education and provide a forum for new ideas about society. Kebe's view on education in Africa was something few Europeans and Americans knew anything about. Dwight used Kebe's education also to make the point that many Africans were literate in the Arabic language, and that an Arabic-language Bible would be of assistance to Christian missionary activity in Africa. But Dwight also claimed that, notwithstanding Kebe's implication that he had become a Christian, Kebe remained entirely Muslim.

Though it is not recorded how exactly he raised the funds, Kebe successfully returned to Africa, arriving on the ship *Indiana* in Liberia on August 18, 1835. He moved to Sierra Leone, closer to his homeland. That move is the last known recorded act of his long life. Dwight wrote nearly 30 years later of his interviews with Kebe and the African's desire to communicate with Americans about his country's people and culture, as well as his own story. As Kebe expressed to Dwight once, "There are good men in America, but all are very ignorant of Africa."

Bruce Burnside

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### Theodore Dwight, Jr., on Lamen Kebe (1864)

*Unlike African-American Muslim slaves Omar ibn Said and Nicholas Said, Lamen Kebe (ca. 1767–?) did not write an autobiography. But he left behind various Arabic religious manuscripts and several interviews with Theodore Dwight, Jr., a 19th-century author and editor of various magazines. Kebe's interviews with Dwight are a significant chapter in the history of American literature about African Muslims. In 1834, Kebe, also called Old Paul, was freed by a Christian owner who expected "Paul" to become a Christian missionary in the newly created West African country of Liberia. At meetings of the American Colonization Society in 1834 and 1835, Kebe successfully solicited funds from various abolitionists for his journey back to Africa. Years later, in 1864, Dwight published a commentary on Kebe for Methodist Quarterly Review in which he chastised Americans for their ignorance of Africa and their assumption that Africans were incapable of rational thought and rational religious belief. Using Kebe as an example, Dwight presented Africa as a civilized continent that Christian Americans could successfully convert to Christianity. It is a primary example of how the presence of educated Muslim African Americans challenged stereotypes of black people—and changed some minds—in the 19th-century United States. In praising the role of Islam in African society, the document also foreshadowed 20th-century African-American Muslim views that Islam was an African tradition that promoted political self-determination, moral rectitude, and intellectual achievement.*



The erroneous impressions which prevail in the civilized world respecting the condition of the Negro race in Africa are discreditable to the intelligence of the age. The people of the United States are doubly blamable for their false views on this subject, because we owe debts to that portion of fellow-men for ages of wrongs inflicted on them for our benefit, and because, with ample means within our reach for correcting our erroneous opinions, we generally neglect them, and still persist in denying to negroes those intellectual faculties and moral qualities which the Creator has bestowed on the entire human family.

With the books of recent travelers in Africa in their hands, it may well be wondered at that even our most intelligent and humane writers have not yet appealed to the testimony of Bowen, Livingstone, and Barth, to prove that millions of pagan negroes, in different parts of that continent, have been for ages in the practice of some of the most important arts of life, dwelling in comfort and generally at peace; while many other millions have been raised to a considerable



degree of civilization by Mohammedism [Islam], and long existed in powerful independent states; under various changes, it is true, but perhaps not so many or great as those through which the principal nations of "civilized Europe" passed during the same periods.

To refer to but one portion of the vast regions of Africa inhabited by the Black race, namely, that extending along the southern border of the Great Desert, we find there, between the tenth and twentieth degrees of north latitude, five or six kingdoms, most of which have been in existence several centuries, and some a thousand years, mostly under the influence of Mohammedan [Muslim] institutions. These are everywhere similar, so far as they prevail, establishing fixed laws, customs, arts, and learning; and, although abounding in errors and evils on the one side, embracing benefits on the other which are not enjoyed by such portions of the negro race as remain in paganism. The Koran, as is well known, has copied from the Hebrew Scriptures many of the attributes of God and the doctrines of morality, with certain just views of the nature, capacities, duties, and destiny of man; and these are so faithfully taught, that they are conspicuous in the writings of many of the numerous authors in Mohammedan countries, and often displayed, in a more or less satisfactory degree, in the characters and lives of those educated in them. . . .

Readers who have neglected Africa may not be prepared to believe that schools of different grades have existed for centuries in various interior negro countries, and under the provisions of law, in which even the poor are educated at the public expense, and in which the deserving are carried on many years through long courses of regular instruction. Nor is this system always confined to the Arabic language, or to the works of Arabian writers. A number of native languages have been reduced to writing, books have been translated from the Arabic, and original works have been written in them. Schools also have been kept in which native languages are taught. In deed, one of the most gratifying evidences has thus been furnished of the favorable influences exerted by the unrestricted use, as well as the general diffusion of the knowledge of letters; while the truth is not less certain, because hitherto unknown, that large portions of the African Continent lie open to the access of Christian influences through channels thus prepared by education.

These and other facts, which we shall not stop to mention, make it appear wonderful indeed that the African race should be judged by us only from that small and unfortunate portion of it found in the western continent. Where is the excuse for looking only at ten millions, more or less, of slaves and descendants of slaves in America, and entirely neglecting to inquire into the condition and character, the history and capacities of the hundred or more millions of negroes in their native country, who have had some opportunity to show what they are capable of?

It is now time for public attention in the United States to be directed to Africa, and an attentive perusal of the most recent travels will afford the reader the details of many things which we can only cursorily mention in this article, while earlier publications will be found to afford confirmation of some of the most important facts. It certainly will bring more compunction to the hearts of the humane among us, to learn that the race which we have been accustomed to despise as well as to ill treat, still lie under a load of evils perpetuated by the prejudices prevailing even among many of the most enlightened Christians; and it will be surprising to be told, that among the victims of the slave-trade among us have been men of learning and pure and exalted characters, who have been treated like beasts of the field by those who claimed a purer religion. . . .

"Old Paul" [Lamen Kebe] was born in the southern part of Footah [Futa, a Muslim region in West Africa], and in his early childhood used to bring water in a calabash to his mother from the Cabah, one of the head streams of the Jalibah. He afterward lived in the cities of Kebbe [Kebe], or Kibby, and Bundu, where he spent many years in studying under different masters [teachers and professors]. On several occasions he accompanied caravans and armies on mercantile and military expeditions into adjacent and more distant countries, and his accounts of these abound in details of great novelty and interest. The same may be said of his communications on the history, customs, arts, religions, learning, languages, books, schools, teachers, travelers, productions, trade, etc., of the mixed people among whom he lived.

In respect to its varied population, his country resembles the unexplored regions before mentioned, lying between it and the sea-coast; but as Footah [Futa] is a Mohammedan [Muslim] country, the religion of the false prophet [as many

Christians referred to the prophet Muhammad in the 19th century] affords a bond of union strong enough to hold the heterogeneous multitude under one government, and generally in the peaceful enjoyment of the laws, arts, and learning which belong to a Mohammedan [Muslim] community, being provided for by the Koran and claimed by its believers. When we bear in mind that the chief attributes of God and some of the principles of morality were copied into that book from the Hebrew Scriptures, we may realize something of the difference between Mohammedan and Pagan countries in Africa. One great advantage of the former consists in the use of letters. Arabic is taught in schools wherever the priests can find pupils; and such is their proselytizing spirit, or rather (as we may truly say of many of them) their humane desire to diffuse the faith in which they conscientiously believe, that they are sometimes seen in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and other places far from their homes, teaching children to write the Arabic characters on the sand.



Source: Theodore Dwight, Jr. "Condition and Character of Negroes in Africa." *Methodist Quarterly Review* (January 1864): 77–90.

### **Khaalis, Hamaas Abdul (1921–2003)** *Hanafi movement leader*

Hamaas Abdul Khaalis founded the Hanafi movement, a breakaway group of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) that advocated the conversion of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS to Sunni Islam. Khaalis is best known for a 1977 siege in which his religious group took control of three buildings and more than 100 hostages in WASHINGTON, D.C.

Hamaas Khaalis was born Ernest Timothy McGee (sometimes spelled McGhee) in Gary, Indiana, in 1921 and raised a Catholic. During WORLD WAR II, he was discharged from the UNITED STATES MILITARY on the grounds of mental instability and found work as a drummer in NEW YORK CITY. In 1951, he left Catholicism and joined the NOI, taking his Muslim name. In 1956, he became secretary of the Temple No. 2 in CHICAGO, the movement's headquarter mosque.

Accusing NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD of corruption, Khaalis left the NOI in 1958 and founded his own Muslim group, the Hanafi, which was based on the teachings of one of the four major Sunni Islamic schools of thought. Khaalis brought his followers into greater conformity with Sunni Islam by stressing the unity of God and by dissenting from

Elijah Muhammad's racial doctrines. Between 1967 and 1970, Khaalis served as director of the street academy of the Urban League in New York City, a program educating young African Americans who had dropped out of school, a position that enabled him to preach Hanafi Islam to the urban poor.

After Khaalis left the Urban League, the Hanafis, as his group's members were called, moved to Washington, D.C., where they bought property, including a jewelry store in the Georgetown neighborhood. Basketball star KAREEM ABDUL-JABBAR, an early convert, donated a building worth \$78,000 to Khaalis and the Hanafis. The building, which became Hanafi headquarters, stood on the "Gold Coast," a predominantly African-American middle-class enclave about three miles north of the White House.

By the early 1970s, the New York mosque may have had 1,500 members, and the Washington mosque had perhaps 2,500, although both of these estimates were likely inflated. As the Hanafis prospered, Khaalis began to compete with the NOI for converts. In 1973, he demanded that Elijah Muhammad resign his leadership of the NOI, sending letters to all NOI mosques denouncing the African-American Muslim leader as a deceiver bound for hell.

On the afternoon of January 18, 1973, eight men armed with sawed-off shotguns forced their way into Hanafi headquarters on 16th Street in the northwestern quadrant of Washington. They shot a Hanafi named Abdul Nur and Khaalis's grown son, Daud. The intruders then dragged Bibi, Khaalis's 26-year-old second wife, to a bathroom and forced her to watch as they drowned Khaalis's nine-day-old granddaughter and two of Bibi's own children, a one-year-old girl and an infant boy. Then they shot Bibi and killed her remaining toddler and Rahman Uddein, the 10-year-old son of Khaalis by his first wife. Finally, they pushed Khaalis's adult daughter Almina into a closet and shot her. They robbed the house before fleeing the scene of the massacre. Although seriously wounded, both Bibi and Almina survived. Bibi and Almina reported that the gunmen had identified the slayings as revenge for Khaalis's letters denouncing Elijah Muhammad.

In response to the attack, Khaalis called on foreign Muslims to support his cause against the NOI. He said that Elijah Muhammad was a murderer of women and children and accused the boxer MUHAMMAD ALI and the singer Yussuf Hazziez (Joe Tex) of complicity in the murders because, as black Muslims, they gave money to the NOI. Muhammad denied responsibility for the murders, and no direct evidence ever linked him to the killings. Five men, four of them associated with the NOI in PHILADELPHIA, were found guilty of the murders and received seven consecutive life sentences in 1974.

Khaalis's final response to the killings came on March 9, 1977, when 12 of his followers armed with rifles, shotguns, and machetes joined him in a takeover of three buildings in Washington: the District Building (or City Hall), the ISLAMIC

CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C., and the headquarters of the B'nai B'rith, a Jewish humanitarian and public affairs organization. As the gunmen asserted control of the District Building, they killed a security guard named Mark Cantrell and Maurice Williams, a 24-year-old African-American radio reporter who suddenly encountered the gunmen as he stepped off an elevator. Washington, D.C., councilman and future mayor Marion Barry was wounded in the chest. Khaalis and his followers slapped and cut other hostages to intimidate them. The Hanafi gunmen held 132 hostages for 36 hours in an incident that came to be known as the "Hanafi Siege."

The event that precipitated the siege may have been the release of *Mohammad, Messenger of God*, a film made by MOUSTAPHA AKKAD. Khaalis demanded that the government suppress the film as blasphemous. His other demands reflected long-simmering grievances. He wanted the government to hand over the men convicted of killing his family. He also asserted that the judge who had sentenced the killers had not sufficiently investigated the killers' link to the NOI. He complained that the mainstream media—which he referred to as the "Zionist press"—and the government had neglected the murder of his family. He expressed particular bitterness toward the NOI, especially Muhammad Ali.

The intervention of three ambassadors from Muslim countries brought the siege to an end. Learning that Egyptian citizens were among the hostages at the Islamic Center, Egyptian ambassador Ashraf Ghorbal volunteered to enter negotiations with Khaalis. He solicited the help of Iranian ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi and Pakistani ambassador Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan. The three approached Khaalis by appealing to his Muslim faith. Ghorbal called the political director of the Egyptian embassy, who supplied him with quotations from the QUR'AN praising peace, mercy, and moderation. The three ambassadors first established rapport with Khaalis over the phone. Khaalis then agreed to allow Ghorbal to meet him in person. Ghorbal embraced Khaalis, who was carrying a knife, and the two discussed the murder of Khaalis's children.

Eventually Khaalis dropped all of his demands and asked only to go home. He released the hostages on the condition that he would not be arrested immediately. Khaalis was allowed to go home on his own recognizance pending a trial. Khaalis was later tried, convicted, and sentenced to 21 to 120 years in prison for his role in the siege. He died in a federal prison in North Carolina on November 13, 2003.

Sonja Spear

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### Khan, Fazlur Rahman (1929–1982) *architect*

Fazlur Rahman Khan was a prominent architect whose landmark buildings transformed the CHICAGO skyline in the mid-20th century. Using "tubular construction," he designed some of the world's tallest and most distinctive skyscrapers.

Fazlur Khan was born on April 3, 1929, in Dhaka, Bengal, then part of India, located in present-day Bangladesh. His father, Abdur Rahman Khan (1890–1964), the principal of Jagannath College from 1948 to 1956, made sure that his son became well educated. After completing an undergraduate degree in engineering at the University of Dhaka in 1951, Khan received a Fulbright scholarship to study in the United States. He earned a master's degree in theoretical and applied mechanics and a doctorate in structural engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1955.

After graduation, Khan accepted a position in Chicago at Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, one of the nation's leading architectural firms. He designed Chicago's landmark John Hancock Center, which was built in 1969, and the 110-story Sears Tower (renamed the Willis Tower in 2009), the tallest building in the world when it was completed in 1973 and still the tallest building in the United States. The John Hancock Center displayed Khan's innovative engineering in its tubular construction. In tubular construction, a tubelike structural system composed of frames joined at the edges allows the outer shell of the building to support the structure, withstanding lateral forces such as wind.

Tubular construction, characteristic of the Second Chicago School of Architecture, enabled skyscrapers to reach unprecedented heights. Khan used tubular construction for both practical and decorative effect, arranging the tubes in patterns on the outside of the buildings instead of hiding supporting beams within the walls. In the John Hancock Center, an icon of the structural expressionist style of architecture, these supporting tubes made a visible X-shaped pattern on the outside or "skin" of the tower.

Khan created the bundled tube, a variation on tubular construction in which several tubes are tied together, for the Sears Tower and One Magnificent Mile, another Chicago skyscraper. These buildings demonstrated the flexibility of the tube by breaking away from boxlike construction and arranging the tube units in various patterns. For example, the 60-story Onterie Center, designed by Khan and erected in Chicago in 1985, featured a diamond pattern of concrete in-fill panels that bear the weight of the structure without relying on steel

beams. The building won the Best Structure Award from the Structural Engineers Association of Illinois in 1986.

Khan also designed structures for clients abroad, including in Saudi Arabia. The Hajj Terminal of the King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, completed in 1982, the year Khan died, accommodated more than 1 million people during the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The terminal featured a fabric-tension structure draped over pylons to create the effect of an enormous tent. The innovative design won the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1983.

Khan died on March 27, 1982. In addition to his work as an architect and engineer, Khan also created the Bangladesh Emergency Welfare Appeal to raise funds for humanitarian aid to Bengalis during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. Twenty years later, Bangladesh posthumously awarded him the Independence Day Medal in 1991.

But Khan's greatest monument was his contribution to the Chicago skyline. In 1998, the city recognized his contribution by naming the intersection of Franklin and Jackson Streets at the foot of the Sears Tower "Fazlur R. Khan Way."

*Sonja Spear with Mir Tarek Ali*

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#### **Khan, Inayat (1882–1927)** *Sufi missionary in the United States*

Inayat Khan, or Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan, as he was known to his disciples, was born into a prominent family of Muslim musicians in Baroda, India, on July 5, 1882. Trained in the two primary styles of Indian classical music, he was initiated into the Nizami branch of the CHISHTI SUFI ORDER by Abu Hashim Madani, as well as taking instruction in the other three major Sufi orders of Muslim South Asia: the Qadiri Sufi Order, the Suhrawardi Sufi Order, and the NAQSHBANDI SUFI ORDER.

Prompted by his master to leave India and propagate SUFISM in the West, Inayat Khan departed Bombay (Mumbai) for NEW YORK CITY on September 13, 1910. Touring with an Indian musical troupe composed of members of his family, he eventually made his way to San Francisco, where he met Ada Martin (1871–1947, later known as Rabia Martin), among his earliest and most important American disciples. Before he and his troupe left for England in 1912, Inayat Khan designated Martin as leader, or *murshida*, of the Sufi Order in America. He would return to the United States in 1923 and again in 1925. Under Martin, a meeting house, or "Sufi Temple," was established in San Francisco, and a larger

center, called Kaaba Allah, was opened in Fairfax, California, in 1925. It was destroyed by fire in 1949.

As with his American tour, in which he gave numerous lectures and performances at universities, recital halls, and other venues public and private, much of Khan's time in Europe was consumed with touring. He held countless informal talks with potential disciples and gave formal initiation into the Sufi Order to all who requested it. By 1915, his SUFI ORDER OF THE WEST was registered in London under the "Rules and Regulations of the Sufi Order."

In the same city, two years earlier, Khan married an American, Ora Ray Baker (1892–1949, a niece of Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science), who took the Sufi name Ameena Begum. They had four children: Noor-un-Nisa (1914–44), Vilayat (1916–2004), Hidayat (1917– ), and Khayr-un-Nisa (1919– ), known as Claire. In 1922, the family settled in Suresnes, near Paris, France, from where Inayat Khan directed the activities of his ever-growing body of disciples fanned out across Europe and, to a lesser extent, the United States. His home came to be known as Fazal Manzil, or "Blessed House," and served as the seat of the Sufi Order and the location of the first International Summer School for its members, subsequently held annually in Katwijk, the Netherlands.

In 1923, the International Headquarters of the Sufi Movement was legally instituted in Geneva. Khan and a sizable group of disciples would later establish centers in England, the Netherlands, France, and Switzerland. He returned to the United States in 1923, at which time he initiated the important American Sufi teacher SAMUEL LEWIS, and again in 1925, but on September 13, 1926, he bid farewell to his disciples in the garden of Fazal Manzil and returned to India. He died there on February 5, 1927, and was interred in Delhi near the shrine complex of the celebrated 14th-century Chishti Sufi master, Nizam al-Din Awliya. Titular succession appears to have been passed to his son VILAYAT INAYAT KHAN, who was only 10 years old at the time.

The history of the Sufi Order and the Sufi Movement (its umbrella organization and public face) and their various splinter groups in Europe following the death of Inayat Khan is complex. In the United States, however, Inayat Khan's original formulation appears to have lasted largely intact (albeit isolated from its European counterparts) under the direction of Rabia Martin. With her death in 1947, however, the assets and properties of the American order were transferred to the Indian mystic Meher Baba (also known as Merwan Sheriar Irani) and Martin's position as *murshida* to his follower Ivy Oneita Duce. Under the direction of Meher Baba and Duce, in 1952 the Sufi Order in America was officially rechartered into an organization called Sufism Reoriented. Inayat Khan's Sufi Order in America had essentially ceased to exist until revived by his son Vilayat Inayat Khan in the late 1960s.



While Inayat Khan wrote little himself, a copious body of writings was published posthumously under his name. These works were comprised mainly of edited transcriptions of talks and lectures. There is also an unpublished body of writings circulated primarily among affiliates. Although the main locus of activity for Inayat Khan and his Sufi Order focused squarely on Europe during his lifetime, as evinced in the work of individuals such as Samuel Lewis and, later, Vilayat Inayat Khan, his influence on the development of universalist Sufi movements in America was profound. In addition, his standing as one of the foundational bearers of Eastern wisdom to the Western world is well secured within the collective memory of the wider American New Age movement.

Erik S. Ohlander

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### Khan, Vilayat Inayat (1916–2004) *head of the Sufi Order International*

Vilayat Inayat Khan, known to his followers as Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, was born in London, England, on June 19, 1916. The eldest son of INAYAT KHAN (1882–1927), the Indian Sufi teacher credited with introducing Sufism to the West, and the American Sufi devotee Ameena Begum (1892–1949, born Ora Ray Baker), Vilayat Inayat Khan was head of the Sufi Order International and a prominent figure in the history of Sufi movements in Europe and North America.

Although Vilayat Inayat Khan was only 10 years old when his father died, it appears that he had already been designated to succeed him as master (*pir-o-murshid*) of the Sufi Order, a registered religious association that Inayat Khan had established over the course of his 16-year mission in the West. For many years, however, the actual administration of the order and its associated umbrella organization, the Sufi Movement, was left to others, and a complex series of disputes over succession to Inayat Khan's position among his immediate family and followers dogged Vilayat Inayat Khan's emergence as generally recognized successor to his father.

Educated at the Sorbonne in Paris and at Oxford, England, Khan relocated from France to Great Britain during WORLD WAR II, where he served with the Royal Air Force and

then with the Royal Navy, eventually being granted a posting in India. His older sister, Noor Inayat Khan, also supported the British war effort (as a spy in German-occupied France) and was executed as a prisoner of war at Dachau concentration camp in 1944. Vilayat Khan later became a conference officer at the Pakistani embassy in London, but in 1956, at the age of 40, he assumed his role as head of the Sufi Order and began traveling in support of its propagation. In this he was well served by his fluency in French, German, Dutch, and English.

While the original Sufi Order in America led by Inayat Khan's first American disciple and designed *murshida*, or guide, in North America, Rabia Martin (1871–1947), had long since dissolved entirely into another organization, Vilayat Inayat Khan attempted to effect a rapprochement between the remnants of Martin's disciples and their successors, affiliates, and spiritual heirs. When he arrived in the United States in the early 1960s, he contacted Sufis who were led, at least in part, by the San Francisco Bay Area Sufi teacher SAMUEL LEWIS (1896–1971). Lewis's group was brought into the Sufi Order in 1968, although relations became strained by disagreements that emerged between the two groups following Lewis's death. The final break occurred in 1977, when Lewis's former disciples formed the Sufi Islamia Ruhaniat Society (SIRS) as an alternative to Vilayat Khan's newly revived Sufi Order International.

In the early 1970s, land was purchased near New Lebanon, New York, to establish the Abode of the Message, a sprawling residential community and retreat located on the site of a former Shaker village. It opened in 1975. Under Khan's leadership, the Abode of the Message community sponsored myriad public and private events for both disciples and visitors. While the international headquarters of the Sufi Order remained in France, the American branch of the group was headquartered on and off at the Abode of the Message (as well as in Santa Fe and Seattle), with some 100 local centers of different sizes spread across the United States and Canada.

Governed by a board of trustees headed by Khan, the affairs of the Sufi Order were coordinated through a Secretariat and an Interstate Council, whose leaders Khan appointed. The organization's English-language publications were published and distributed through Omega Publications, and further activities coordinated through the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies in Rhinebeck, New York, which Khan helped found in 1977. From the 1970s through the late 1990s, Khan was a popular lecturer among the New Age community in the United States and Europe, as well as a prominent participant in various INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS and ecumenical endeavors. He also represented an active voice in the burgeoning dialogue between science and spirituality that had begun to emerge in the late 1980s.

Unlike his father, whose literary legacy was comprised largely of edited transcriptions of talks and lectures given to his disciples, Vilayat Inayat Khan published a series of books that describe the doctrines and eclectic practices of what is usually called Universal Sufism. This style of Sufism borrows ideas from popular American psychology, science, and spirituality rather than relying solely on Islamic language and religious traditions. In his publications, Khan cast aside the goal of converting people to Islam and instead focused on encouraging them to develop a more general notion of spirituality. He imagined a world in which personal transformation would lead to a spiritual evolution for humankind as a whole. Some of his followers showed no interest in Islamic religious traditions such as *salat*, or daily prayer, while others more closely aligned themselves with the traditions of Islamic RELIGIOUS LIFE. According to the Sufi Order, some 10,000 individuals in North America were initiated by Vilayat Inayat Khan. In 1997, the North American section of the Sufi Order International reported a total of about 1,200 dues-paying members and a total circulation for its quarterly magazine, *Hearts & Wings*, of approximately 3,000. By the late 1990s, as many as 8,000 individuals were maintained on the organization's mailing list.

Before his death, Vilayat Inayat Khan officially designated his son, Zia Inayat Khan (1971– ), as his successor and as president-elect of the Sufi Order International. Vilayat Inayat Khan died on June 17, 2004, at his home in Suresnes, France, and his body was transported to Delhi, India, to be interred near his father. Since that time, Zia Inayat Khan has actively overseen the affairs of the organization from the Abode of the Message in New Lebanon.

Erik S. Ohlander

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### **LADO (Latino American Dawah Organization)**

Founded in September 1997 by a handful of U.S. Latina/o Muslims in NEW YORK CITY, LADO, the Latino American Dawah Organization, has become one of the most important and influential organizations among Latina/o Muslims in the United States. Juan Alvarado, Samantha Sánchez, and Saraji Umm Zaid, its founders, formed the organization to promote Islam among Latina/os in the United States and to create a network of support among them. From LADO's inception, the INTERNET has played an important role in the organization's attempt to create a sense of Latina/o-Muslim community. A month after forming this grassroots organization, the leaders created a Web site and an online newsletter, which features conversion stories and the testimonies of Latina/o Muslims across the United States.

From 1997 to 2001, LADO focused on forming alliances with local organizations throughout the country. In 2001, Juan Galvan, who later became executive director, helped to shift the direction of the movement. Galvan sought to raise the public profile of the organization, and in July 2001, LADO obtained endorsements from the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) and the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA (ICNA), and began working closely with the ISNA's own Latina/o coordinating committee. As part of this new approach, Galvan began to rethink and redesign the Web site, which was finally unveiled in May 2005.

LADO also coordinated the first magazine issue dedicated to the presence of Latina/o Muslims in the United States, which appeared in ISNA's *Islamic Horizons* in July-August 2002. Included was the first comprehensive history of the community by Galvan and Samantha Sánchez. The mainstream press noticed the issue and followed up by interviewing members of LADO and other U.S. Latina/o Muslims. LADO also coordinated the coverage of the community in the November-December 2004 and the December 2005-January 2006 editions of the *Message International*, the monthly magazine of ICNA.

Since December 2003, LADO has also written and translated materials about Islam into Spanish and has given an increasing number of public presentations on the topic of Latina/o Muslims. According to some observers, this high-

profile coverage has turned LADO into the most popular missionary organization among Latina/o Muslims in the United States. Their Web site and newsletter have been used not only for education but to make connections with other members of the community across the country. LADO has publicized the conversion stories of Latina/o Muslims in the United States, which has in turn created a better understanding of Latina/o Muslims among non-Muslims.

Hjamil A. Martínez-Vázquez

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### **Lang, Jeffrey (1954- ) math professor, author**

Jeffrey Lang, an American convert to Islam, is a professor of mathematics at the University of Kansas. He is also a popular author of three books, all published by a Muslim-American press, and a commentator on Muslim-American affairs.

Lang was born on January 30, 1954, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, to a Roman Catholic family and attended Notre Dame Catholic High School. During a difficult childhood in which he was witness to domestic violence, Lang questioned the Catholic faith in which he was being raised. At the age of 16, he became an atheist.

After obtaining a Ph.D. in mathematics from Purdue University in 1981, Lang started teaching at the University of San Francisco. There he met Mahmoud Qandeel, a young Arab Muslim who attended the university, and the two became friends. Qandeel and his family frequently invited Lang to their house, taught him about Islam, and gave him his first copy of the QUR'AN. After reading it and learning more about Islam, he converted in 1982, an experience that is described in his autobiography, *Struggling to Surrender* (1994).

Since his conversion to Islam, Lang has written about his views on Islamic religion and Muslim-American affairs in three books, popular partly because Lang does not adopt a scholarly approach to Islam but discusses the religion in simple, accessible language. Lang's inclusion of personal stories and memories, in addition to his willingness to pose difficult questions about the state of the Muslim-American community, has been similarly attractive to Muslim-American readers.

In *Struggling to Surrender*, for example, Lang not only discussed his attraction to the Qur'an, the prophet MUHAMMAD, and the Islamic faith, he also broached the question of whether the Qur'an and the hadith, the sayings and deeds of Muhammad and his companions, were historically reliable. He also addressed questions of gender discrimination and violence in Islam, attempting to show how both were un-Islamic. His second book, *Even Angels Ask* (1997), somewhat similarly addressed basic issues related to Islamic religion in the modern world but also emphasized the need for Muslim unity in the face of what Lang perceived as a falling away from the faith by first-generation immigrant children.

Lang's third book, *Losing My Religion: A Call for Help* (2004), was written in response to more than 1,300 pages of text from emails that Lang received from young Muslims troubled by various aspects of the Muslim-American community. According to Lang's correspondents, Muslim immigrant YOUTH would fall away from the faith if it meant maintaining the gender segregation advocated by some Muslim social conservatives and older, first-generation immigrants. Lang responded by asking younger Muslim Americans to discard the outdated and regressive aspects of Muslim cultures in favor of focusing on Islam's true messages of love. Echoing the calls of scholars such as HAMZA YUSUF, Lang also advised young Muslims to study traditional forms of Islamic learning and Western scholarship on Islam so they could better combat the challenges faced by Muslim Americans.

Matthew Long

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### Last Poets

In the late 1960s, a group of African-American poets began meeting regularly in Harlem, New York, to share their poetry, inspired by the call for black self-determination of groups such as the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) and the Black Panthers, a militaristic group dedicated to the defense of Black neigh-

borhoods from police brutality and a class-based critique of society. The group's members, including Abiodun Oyewole, Jaludin Nuruddin, Sulieman El-Hadi, and Umar bin Hassan, changed and split over the years and never achieved financial stability. However, their jazzlike syncopated recitation verse over African-style drumming helped to inspire the burgeoning hip-hop sound, earning them the frequent epithet "godfathers of rap." Their poetry challenged and influenced successive generations of rappers from Public Enemy to the CHICAGO rapper Common in the fierceness of its politics and the fearlessness in describing the reality of street life in urban America. Many in the group identified themselves with the Nation of Islam in the early 1970s and later, as the group moved away from the NOI, Islamic themes continued to shape their poetry and their politics of revolution.

The Last Poets took to the stage for the first time on May 19, 1968, in Mount Morris Park (now Marcus Garvey Park) in Harlem for a MALCOLM X celebration. Malcolm and the Nation of Islam had impressed all of the Last Poets, even the non-Muslim members. Abiodun Oyewole, a member who practiced the Yoruba religion of Africa, had seen Malcolm giving speeches when he visited his aunt in Harlem as a boy. With the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., in April 1968 and the increasing amount of rioting and unrest, he believed that they all needed to "think a little bit more like Malcolm," a reference to the need for black self-defense against racial attacks—the riots were often in response to acts of police brutality. The group's name was a reflection of this belief in the need for increased militancy. A South African member, Willie Kghostile, gave the group their name from a poem in which he claimed they were the "last poets" before a new generation would take up guns instead of words.

The Poets met Friday nights in their loft they called East Wind and performed for each other and residents of the neighborhood. The local Black Panthers were fans, as were many in their target audience: the urban poor. People responded to their frank approach to issues of the ghetto, racism, and poverty though not necessarily their Islamic themes. The group released two albums in the early 1970s that brought their message further than their readings, *Last Poets* and *This Is Madness*. Their explicit calls for revolution are emphasized in writings about the group, at the expense of their religious leanings. Yet they were often combined. Oyewole wrote in "When the Revolution Comes" that "Black cultural centers will be forts / supplying the revolutionaries with food and arms / white death will fall off the walls / of museums and churches / breaking the lie that enslaved our mothers." The group's heightened presence placed them under the surveillance of the FBI's COINTELPRO program, which targeted and disrupted groups and individuals whom the FBI considered subversive. Oyewole robbed a Ku Klux Klan office and was sent to prison. Other members also served prison time,



but the group continued to release albums and perform with different personnel.

Perhaps the most explicitly Islamic-themed album was *At Last*, released in 1974. The cover photograph featured Nuruddin, El-Hadi, and Hassan all wearing Muslim-style kufis, with prostration marks (*sajada*) visible on their foreheads. The members moved away from the antiwhite rhetoric of Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam toward a view of Islam they believed was not exclusive to African Americans and continued to advocate revolution. In "This Is Madness," Hassan had invoked Allah as part of a roll call of spirits for cosmic reordering: "Oh Isis. / Oh Tuthmosis. / Oh Sun Ra. / Oh Allah. / Bismillahi Rahman Nir Raheem / give me strength to rise up and reorder the Cosmos so / that man can truly appreciate the Cosmic beauties / and realities of Science and Love." Isis and Tuthmosis were references to an Egyptian goddess and a pharaoh, respectively, and Sun Ra was a contemporary African-American saxophone player who claimed to be a reborn god. Hassan claimed them all as a lineage of the Black Power movement. The phrase "*Bismillahi Rahman Nir Raheem*" translates from Arabic as "In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful," and opens each chapter of the Qur'an. This was a recurring theme of the Last Poets' verse, where they found encouragement for advocating for Black Power from reclaimed sources of African heritage, including the Egyptians and Islam.

Hassan left the group in the mid-1970s and became disillusioned with Islam, as he had practiced it. He went through a series of marriages and bouts with depression, homelessness, and drug addiction in the 1980s, reduced to reciting his poetry in crack houses in the middle of a drug haze. In the early 1990s, he successfully overcame his drug addiction and began releasing poetry again, mostly with Oyewole. Hassan appeared in 2005 with Oyewole on the rapper Common's song "The Corner," from his album *Be*. Common says he "felt good about introducing some of the youth to the Last Poets" and that their "spirit brought something pure to" the song.

Nuruddin and El-Hadi continuously performed together as a separate entity of the Last Poets. Their poetry continued to include a critique of racism and especially the drug epidemics of the 1970s and 1980s. Islamic motifs continued to be evoked in their work, not just as an inspiration for revolution, but also to reflect spiritual solace. In "Garden of Delight," El-Hadi writes: "Reason draws itself the line / El Quran the signs define / Let me taste the vintage / of the vine, divine." In "Hands Off," El-Hadi boasts of the Islamic contributions to European civilization: "It was I who taught you that this planet was round / In Palermo, Sicily and Italy and Spain / I left monuments of my grandeur and fame / And during your dark ages, when your people were blind / I built universities to enlighten your kind." El-Hadi died of a heart attack on October 3, 1995.

Some members of the Last Poets claimed that they never achieved financial success because they refused to curb their revolutionary message, which made the group difficult to market. Their poetic sensibility and commitment to their message, however, influenced the development of rap music in the late 20th century. As Oyewole noted in his "Invocation": "The Last Poets were on a mission, / We became the voices of the East Wind / Blowing away the West with our sound / The Last Poets, men who knew / In their youth truth must be told."

Bruce Burnside

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### Lateef, Yusef (William Evans, William Emanuel Huddleston) (1920– ) jazz artist and educator

Jazz musician Yusef Lateef was born William Evans (some sources give his last name as Huddleston) on October 9, 1920, in Chattanooga, Tennessee. When Lateef was three years old, his family relocated to Lorraine, Ohio, and eventually to DETROIT, MICHIGAN, where Lateef attended Miller High School. At Miller, Lateef's formal musical education began. One of his classmates was vibraphonist Milt Jackson. Lateef took up both alto and tenor saxophone.



Jazz pioneer Yusef Lateef performs on saxophone at the North Sea Jazz Festival held in The Hague, Netherlands, in July 1992. In the 1950s and 1960s, Lateef explored the fusion of American jazz with African and Asian styles of music. Though he continued to perform into the 21st century, he also became a musicologist and earned a doctoral degree in 1975. (*JazzSign/Lebrecht Music & Arts*)

In 1939, he found his first professional work with Matthew Rucker and his group 13 Spirits of Swing. He then was hired by Erskine Hawkins's Bama State Collegians. A succession of gigs followed: stints with the bands of Lucky Millinder, Hot Lips Page, Roy Eldridge, Ernie Fields, and Dizzy Gillespie. Sometime in the 1940s, Lateef converted to Islam and changed his name. Lateef studied under Muslim missionary Kahil Ahmed Nasir, who was based in New York and was part of the Ahmadiyya movement. This influence was reflected in Lateef's work, in which he often performed in a turban and incorporated elements of Asian musical culture in his music.

In 1950, Lateef returned to Detroit to study music composition and flute at Wayne State University. He received additional instruction on the flute at the Teal School of Music. With Donald Byrd, he founded the New World Music Society, a musicians' collective, for which Lateef served as vice president.

Lateef's residence at a Detroit jazz club, the Blue Bird Inn, brought him considerable attention. In 1954, Lateef began studying the oboe and formed his own group, which included pianist Hugh Lawson, trombonist Curtis Fuller, and drummer Louis Hayes. The following year, Lateef and his group signed a recording contract with Savoy Records and produced in his first album, *Jazz Moods*. This recording was unique for its use of Eastern instruments.

Returning to New York in 1960, Lateef performed with bassist Charles Mingus, saxophonist Cannonball Adderly, and Nigerian drummer Babatunde Olatunji. After his stint with Adderly, Lateef reformed his own band and recorded several albums for Impulse! Records. In 1967, Lateef signed with Atlantic Records, which allowed him to explore his interest in African and Asian musical influences, incorporating instruments uncommon to jazz such as the shanai, a long reed instrument. In 1992, he formed his own record label, YAL Records, to distribute his recordings and those of other musicians.

Lateef received a bachelor's degree in music in 1969 and a master's in music education in 1970 from the Manhattan School of Music. From 1972 to 1976, he served as associate professor of music at the Borough of Manhattan Community College. In 1975, he earned a doctoral degree in education from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. In 1980, Lateef relocated to Nigeria, where he held the position of senior fellow at the Center for Nigerian Cultural Studies at Ahmadu Bello University. After returning to the United States in 1986, he began teaching at his alma mater, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, as well as at Massachusetts's Hampshire College.

In 1981, Lateef ceased performing in venues that served alcohol, which curtailed considerably his club appearances. Despite this, Yusef Lateef continued to perform, record, and teach throughout the first decade of the 21st century.

Jason E. Housley

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### Latina/o Muslim Americans

Muslim Latinos and Latinas have an historical presence in North America that began with the 16th-century Spanish exploration of the Western Hemisphere and continued through the establishment of European colonial empires and the eventual emergence of the United States. By the 21st century, there were approximately 40,000 Spanish-speaking Muslim Americans, representing ethnic and national heritages that include the United States, Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. According to a 2007 Pew poll, 4 percent of all Muslim Americans identified as Hispanic, meaning that more than 100,000 Muslim American traced their ethnic roots to a Latina/o heritage. Muslim communities in the United States have demonstrated remarkable growth in recent decades, particularly among Latinas, and missionary work has become an important part of contemporary Hispanic Muslim life.

The first Spanish-speaking Muslim known in the Americas was the North African ESTEVANICO (ca. 1500–39), also known as Estevanico el Moro or Esteban “the black.” Born in Azemmour, Morocco, in his youth Estevanico—“Little Stephen”—was captured and sold as a slave in Spain. Estevanico reached America in 1528 as part of the disastrous Pánfilo de Narváez expedition that arrived in what are now the states of Florida, Texas, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa before reconnecting with Spanish colonial settlements in Culiacán in 1536. During his trek through the American Southwest and Mexico, Estevanico earned a reputation for his linguistic skills, as well as for his powers as a healer. In 1539, Estevanico was captured by Native Americans and killed near present-day Zuni, New Mexico.

In addition to the presence of other Muslims who appeared in Spanish-language colonial documents in the 16th century, traces and influences of Islamic culture from North Africa and Andalusia became felt in Latin America. For example, numerous Arabic words and Muslim expressions passed into Spanish, such as *alcalde* (mayor) from the Arabic *al-qadi*, or the emphatic interjection *olé*, from the Arabic *Allah* (god). In addition, some features of Muslim culture that developed in Islamic Spain from 711 c.e. through 1492 c.e.—including architectural, literary, and musical tastes and styles, along with influence on cuisine and manners—made the Atlantic passage. Some suggest that Islam, through the *mudéjars* and *moriscos* (unconverted Muslims who remained in Christian Spain) played an important and

uncredited role in helping shape society and culture in the Western Hemisphere. The idea that an underlying Muslim identity survived the vigorous religious militancy of the *Reconquista*—the Catholic “reconquest” of Spain—and remains the authentic “original” if lost heritage of Spanish speakers in the Americas is a powerful theme in the spread of Islam among Latinas and Latinos in the United States to this day.

Little is known about the history of individual Hispanic Muslims and communities in the colonial Americas and the 19th century, and it is unclear to what extent Muslim identities survived in northern Mexico or what became the United States after the admission of Texas as a state in 1845 and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. At least some Spanish-speaking ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIM immigrants, who had originally come from the Middle East, resettled in the United States after 1880. In addition, the children of South Asian sailors and Hispanic women in New Orleans, NEW YORK CITY, and California also perpetuated Muslim identities to some extent in the late 19th century. But this period is a subject in need of further research.

Much more is known about Latina/o conversion or “reversion” to Islam in the second half of the 20th century, when many U.S. Hispanics began to reexamine the history of Spanish speakers in the Americas, with particular focus on culture, ethnicity, and religion. This new and assertive approach to reclaim and redefine Hispanic communal identity in many ways paralleled resurgence movements within the U.S. African-American community, particularly the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI). In addition, nationalistic movements such as those in Puerto Rico helped fuel fresh interrogations of cultural and religious practices and encouraged identification not with “Western” culture but with indigenous and African traditions.

The creation of this new consciousness of pride and cultural achievement often demanded the rejection of prevailing social norms, including Christianity. Spanish Harlem writer Piri Thomas expressed this idea in his autobiographical novel *Down These Mean Streets* (1967), an account of his struggle against multiple forms of racism and discrimination as a Puerto Rican in New York City. The book includes a long passage about how he converted to Islam in prison after encountering NOI members. This sentiment—that Christianity is not the authentic religion of non-Europeans and indeed enslaves them—was also captured in the fiery rhetoric of Diogenes X Grassal, an NOI preacher active in New York in the early 1970s.

Grassal began a successful mission to bring black Latinas and Latinos to Islam, writing in *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS* in 1971 that “the white man has had us tricked and divided for centuries in order to enslave us” and was able to accomplish this through Christianity. Grassal declared that “Black

Latin Americans must know today our true history, heritage and religion (Islam), which has come back to us thanks to Allah,” and he portrayed Islam not as a religious choice for blacks and Latinas and Latinos but rather as an inherent component of their racial identity. Grassal’s special outreach to Puerto Ricans in New York helped set the stage for the creation in 1975 of the ALIANZA ISLÁMICA, a grassroots association that organized the first mosque for Spanish-speaking Muslims.

By the 1980s, Hispanic community organizations began to develop special missions and concerns. PIEDAD (Propagación Islámica para la Educación de Devoción a Ala’ el Divino) developed in New York in 1987 and 1988 with the goal of helping non-Muslim Latinas in Muslim families understand the expectations of the faith and different Muslim cultures. The group, founded by Khadijah Rivera, has grown into a leading advocate for the concerns of Spanish-speaking Muslims in the United States.

In the 1980s and 1990s, another pattern of Hispanic interest in Islam that deemphasized Muslim identity as a racial legacy became more pronounced. Islam came to be seen as an inclusive religious tradition with a universal message not limited to particular ethnic communities. The tension between these two positions—that Islam is either a particular birthright of Hispanics or a more general and inclusive universal religious choice—was sometimes indicated in the choice of terms to describe those who come to embrace Islam. Some used the word *reversos*, meaning those who revert to Islam, while others preferred *conversos*, referring to converts to the tradition.

In this period, Latinas and Latinos began to explore other faiths, and some were first introduced to Islam through meeting practicing non-Hispanic Muslims. The story of how the Texas-born Latino comedian Raphael Narbaez, Jr., came to Islam illustrates this pattern. Narbaez was raised as a Jehovah’s Witness, a form of Christianity, but grew increasingly disenchanted with the group and Christianity in general. A brief encounter with a Muslim saleswoman in a mall fired his curiosity about Islam, and he ultimately visited a mosque to learn more before he embraced Islam in 1991. For Narbaez, Islam was a religious choice that reconciled his questions about faith and spirituality rather than a rediscovery and fulfillment of a lost Latina/o heritage. Other Spanish-speaking Muslims of mixed Hispanic heritages also began to promote this more universal view of Islam. The case of Samir Gustavo Jerez, a New York-born U.S. Marine of Cuban and Puerto Rican ancestry highlighted this trend. Jerez became a Muslim during basic training at Camp Pendleton, California, and in 1993 filed an official complaint about the use of a training film that he considered racist and offensive because of its depiction of Muslims and Arabs. The film was later removed from the marine educational program.

Other groups dedicated to the promotion and support of Latina and Latino Muslims in the United States emerged throughout the 1990s, including the important organization LADO (Latino American Dawah Organization). Founded in New York in 1997, the group very early expanded its national scope to link developing Hispanic Muslim communities in Florida, Texas, California, Illinois, and other locales. LADO in particular sought to align the emergent communities with other well-established, non-Hispanic Muslim U.S. organizations such as the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA and the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA.

MISSIONARIES in U.S. Hispanic communities have emphasized several features of Islam and Muslim cultures that seem to parallel certain Hispanic cultural values and help make Islam attractive to Latinas and Latinos. A perceived focus on faith and family and a strong emphasis on well-defined gender roles permit some Latinas and Latinos to highlight similarities between certain Hispanic and Muslim lifestyles. These resemblances seem to be particularly persuasive for Latinas, as LADO estimates that 60 percent of U.S. Hispanic converts to Islam are women.

By the beginning of the 21st century, Hispanic Muslims in the United States remained optimistic about the future of Islam among North American Spanish speakers. The communities weathered a post-9/11 backlash and used the moment as a teaching opportunity to challenge anti-Muslim STEREOTYPES and strengthen organizational cooperation. The INTERNET also provided an effective forum for the dispersed and diverse communities. U.S. Hispanic Muslims developed a higher profile in American society in general, as illustrated by the career of the Puerto Rican heritage rapper Hamza Pérez, highlighted in the PBS documentary *New Muslim Cool* (2009), which showed the vitality of Hispanic interest in Islam across generations.

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## law

Muslim Americans have been at the center of critical legal battles in the United States since the late 19th century. Though Muslims have constituted a small minority of the total U.S. population, their importance to U.S. law and by extension American society at large extends far beyond their actual numbers. Over the last century, Muslim Americans have been central actors in three key areas of U.S. law, including debates over the definition of U.S. citizenship, struggles to determine the limits of the First Amendment right to freedom of religion, and disputes over the balance of powers among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government.

### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP

In the late 19th century, there was no federal law preventing most foreign Muslims from immigrating to the United States or becoming U.S. citizens. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 barred the immigration of Chinese laborers to the United States and declared that those already in the country were ineligible to become U.S. citizens, but this law had little impact on Muslim immigrants.

The only clear guidance from Congress concerning Muslim immigration in the late 1800s was an 1891 law banning the admission of polygamists to the United States. Though there was little chance that large numbers of Muslim polygamists were about to appear at American ports, the fear of polygamy reflected domestic political struggles. In the late 19th century, the U.S. government, buoyed by a host of Supreme Court decisions, suppressed the practice of plural marriage among Mormons in the West.

Though there were few legal impediments to Muslim immigration in this era, the question of whether Asian Muslims, having arrived on American shores, could then become U.S. citizens was another matter. According to the 1790 Naturalization Act and the 1870 law that amended it, both “free white persons” and persons of African descent were eligible for U.S. citizenship so long as they were of good moral character, pledged an oath to the U.S. Constitution, and had resided in the United States for two years before applying to become a citizen. Since these laws did not mention whether Asians were eligible for citizenship, however, U.S. courts were left to decide on a case-by-case basis.

In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt’s administration issued guidance to U.S. courts concerning the naturalization petitions of South Asians—all of whom were called Hindoos at the time. Since South Asians were not considered “free white persons,” instructed Attorney General Charles Bonaparte, they should not be permitted citizenship. Many U.S. Courts rejected this advice, however, stating that South Asians were of Aryan racial stock, and thus were white. In 1908, for example, the U.S. District Court in New Orleans



granted citizenship to South Asian Muslims Abdul Hamid and Bellal Houssain.

But in 1913, the U.S. District Court in South Carolina rejected Syrian-Lebanese immigrant Faras Shahid's petition to become a U.S. citizen. Judge Henry Smith said that "a modern Syrian of Asiatic birth and descent" was ineligible for citizenship. The judge claimed first that the applicant was a polygamist (although he was a Christian) and second that Syrians were not white, or as he put it, "a fair-complexioned people of European descent." In 1914, in a similar case denying Syrian-American George Dow's petition for citizenship, Judge Smith reaffirmed his assertion that Syrians were not whites of European descent. But in 1915, the U.S. Court of Appeals overturned Judge Smith's decision. In this case, *Dow v. United States*, the court ruled that "the inhabitants of a portion of Asia, including Syria, were to be classed as white persons."

As a body of case law classifying Syrian and Lebanese as white people continued to build, the passage of new immigration restrictions by Congress scaled back any gains for South Asians in U.S. courts. Expanding the scope of the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Immigration Act of 1917 extended the ban on immigration from almost every other Asian ethnic group, including persons from India, Siam (Thailand), Arabia, Indo-China (Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam), Malaysia, Afghanistan, the Indonesian archipelago, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and parts of central Asia. Similarly, immigrants from these countries were declared ineligible for citizenship, and in the 1921 case, *United States v. Ali*, the U.S. District Court retroactively canceled the naturalization of John Mohammed Ali, who had come to the United States in 1900.

In 1924, the National Origins Act further limited the immigration of people *not* from northwestern Europe by establishing an even more restrictive quota system. This new system ensured that Arab-American Christians and Muslims from Syria and Lebanon, 86,111 of whom had immigrated to the United States between 1899 and 1914, would be allowed into the country only at the rate of 100 annually. These new laws expressed concerns among many Anglo Americans that immigrants from non-Western European countries were bringing both physical and ideological contamination to America, "polluting" the United States with foreign blood and foreign traditions.

Though this quota system would be altered in the years after WORLD WAR II, not until the passage of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 was it abandoned. This new law, which followed on the heels of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, sought to rid the nation's immigration laws of their racial and ethnic biases. As a result of its passage, millions of nonwhites, including more than 1 million Muslims, immigrated to the United States by the end of the 20th century.

## RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN PRISON

In addition to their important place within the history of U.S. law governing immigration and citizenship, Muslim Americans have perhaps played an even larger role in the history of the struggle for religious liberty, especially behind bars. While the free exercise of religion is guaranteed by the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the rights of prisoners to practice their religion were severely curtailed, particularly for non-Christians, before black Muslim challenges to the practice in the 1960s.

The efforts of incarcerated AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS in U.S. courts in the second half of the 20th century helped to establish legal precedents and rights for all prisoners. Generally speaking, these cases guaranteed prisoners the right, with conditions, to assemble for religious services, read religious literature, wear religious garb, consume a special diet, and communicate with religious leaders.

The Supreme Court's 1964 decision in *Cooper v. Pate* was one of the first significant prisoners' rights precedents established by the highest court in the land. Thomas Cooper, a member of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), sued Illinois prison warden Frank Pate on the grounds that Pate's prejudice against the NOI had resulted in the denial of Cooper's right to the free exercise of his religion. Cooper alleged that Pate denied him the right to read religious literature, communicate with NOI ministers, and attend religious services. The state of Illinois argued that the NOI was a political rather than a religious organization, a position the Supreme Court rejected. The court ruled for the first time that prisoners had the right—called the legal "standing"—to seek relief from religious discrimination and required lower courts to hear the lawsuits of prisoners that were filed on this basis. The 1964 ruling made clear that prisons must treat prisoners equally, regardless of their particular religious affiliation, unless there was a compelling reason not to do so. Though wardens and prison officials criticized this decision, prisoners embraced it and took advantage of the opportunity to have their religious discrimination cases heard in the courts. From 1970 to 1989, the number of prisoners' suits in federal courts jumped from 15,997 to 41,390. In 1996, Congress passed the Prison Litigation Reform Act, which made it more difficult for prisoners to file suit against their jailors.

A number of cases argued before both state and federal courts in the 1960s, often on behalf of members of the NOI, expanded the range of religious activities in which African-American Muslim prisoners and others could participate. *Brown v. McGinnis* (1962), decided by the New York Court of Appeals, affirmed that members in the NOI had the right to sue for protection of their religious liberty, though the court also said that the religious practice inside prisons must be balanced by the need to maintain a secure prison environment. *FULWOOD v. CLEMMER*, decided by the U.S. District

Court for the District of Columbia in 1962, agreed with prison officials that they had the right to restrict prisoner access to some religious literature, but also ordered the prison to allow Muslim inmates to wear religious medals and attend religious services. In 1982, a U.S. Court of Appeals ruled in *MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE, INC. v. SMITH* that Muslim prisoners be given access to a diet that adhered to certain aspects of Islamic DIETARY LAWS, including the ban on pork.

But as the Supreme Court became more politically conservative during the administration of President Ronald Reagan, the rights of prisoners to exercise their religion freely began to be scaled back. In a 5-to-4 decision in the case of *O'LONE v. ESTATE OF SHABAZZ*, the court created a new precedent in 1987 governing the rights of prisoners to the free exercise of religion. The court determined that prison officials may make rules governing religious activities in prison that meet a "legitimate" government objective. Prior to this ruling, prison officials had to find that a "compelling interest" was at stake in limiting prisoners' religious activities. Chief Justice William Rehnquist wrote in the majority opinion that when New Jersey prison officials prevented Shabazz from attending Friday congregational prayers, the officials "had acted in a reasonable manner . . . [and] thus did not violate the free exercise of religion clause of the First Amendment."

In 2000, Congress passed the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, which once again adopted the idea, set out in *Cooper v. Pate*, among other places, that prisons must have a "compelling government interest" to restrict the religious activities of prisoners. In 2005, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled in *Cutter v. Wilkinson* that the 2000 law was constitutional and, effectively reversing its own decision in *O'Lone v. Estate of Shabazz*, stated that prisons accepting federal funding must not restrict religious activities of prisoners unless there was a compelling government interest.

#### SEPARATION OF POWERS

In the first decade of the 21st century, Muslim Americans and foreign Muslims were thrust into the center of debates about the balance of government powers among the president, Congress, and the courts—the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, President George W. Bush's administration sought to expand the power of the executive in prosecuting the war on terror. Among the new powers that the Bush administration either sought or simply claimed were expanded rights to gather intelligence on U.S. citizens without the oversight of a judge; to detain (in jail) foreign visitors indefinitely on the suspicion of terrorism; to detain citizens as material witnesses without any direct evidence linking them to a crime; and to declare both citizens and for-

eigners to be "enemy combatants," meaning that rather than being prosecuted in a court of law, they would be held by the U.S. MILITARY. In all cases, the effect of these new security measures was to expand the power of the executive branch by avoiding any sort of judicial review of these activities.

Even though the vast majority of Muslim Americans had no connection with the events of September 11, 2001, all Muslims immediately came under government suspicion for possible ties to terrorism. Approximately 1,200 Muslims, Arabs, and South Asians were immediately rounded up after 9/11 for interrogation, even when there was no evidence linking them to terrorism. Their families had no idea of their location, and the government neither released information about their whereabouts nor allowed them access to a lawyer.

For the very few Muslim Americans such as José PADILLA and Yousef Hamdi who did have some connection to al-Qaeda, the extremist group responsible for the 9/11 attacks, the executive branch's new approach to fighting terrorism restricted their rights as U.S. citizens. Declared "enemy combatants," these two Americans joined hundreds of other Muslims, mostly foreigners, as detainees at the detention center at GUANTÁNAMO BAY, Cuba, and other military prisons. The intention of the Bush administration was to interrogate these terror suspects and then, at a time of the administration's choosing, prosecute them before a military tribunal for their crimes. The administration also unilaterally declared that these detainees had no rights under the Geneva Conventions, a widely accepted international treaty governing the treatment of prisoners of war, and that they had no right of habeas corpus, the right to challenge their detention in a court of law.

In a series of three precedent-setting cases, the Supreme Court disagreed with the Bush administration. In *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld* (2004), the court said that Yaser Esam Hamdi, a Baton Rouge, Louisiana, native picked up by the U.S. military in Afghanistan, could be declared an "illegal enemy combatant," but still retained the right to challenge his detention before an impartial judge. The power of the executive branch to hold citizens, the court ruled, is not absolute. The government never charged Hamdi and eventually released him.

In 2006, the Supreme Court issued another rebuff to President Bush in *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*, a case that originated with the complaint of a Yemeni national who allegedly served as Osama bin Laden's chauffeur. Though Congress had passed a law giving the president the authority to try enemy combatants such as Hamdan before military tribunals, the Court said that the president lacked the authority to proceed. Among the reasons cited was that the tribunals did not conform either to the Uniform Code of Military Justice or to the third Geneva Convention, which outlines the rights of prisoners of war, including their rights in any trial.

Finally, in *Boumediene v. Bush*, the Court ruled in 2008 that all detainees at Guantánamo Bay, including foreign nationals, retained the right of habeas corpus and could challenge their detention in U.S. courts. In the majority opinion, written by Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, the Court noted that “the laws and Constitution are designed to survive, and remain in force, in extraordinary times.” Using his newly granted right to challenge his detention in court, Boumediene’s lawyers challenged his detention in what was the first legal hearing in six years to examine the evidence used to detain him. U.S. District Court Judge Richard J. Leon ruled that the evidence was weak: “To rest on so thin a reed,” he wrote, “would be inconsistent with this court’s obligation.” Leon said that Boumediene should be freed immediately and that the government should not appeal the case.

In these three cases, the judicial branch of government insisted that a balance of powers among the three branches of government remained in effect, even in an age of anxiety. The legal cases of a few Muslim Americans and hundreds of Muslim foreigners forced each branch of the government to decide what it meant to abide by the rule of law. What happened in the first decade of the 21st century will likely have repercussions for years to come.

### CONCLUSION

Debates over U.S. citizenship, religious liberty, and the balance of power among the branches of government are the areas in which Muslim Americans have had the greatest impact on the history of U.S. law. Their involvement with U.S. courts has helped to shape the meaning of American identity. But Muslim-American engagement with the law is not limited to these three areas. Muslim Americans, like all Americans, have also turned to U.S. courts to resolve some of their most intimate disputes. Cases involving controversial issues such as child custody, child abuse, and DIVORCE have often pitted one Muslim American against another. In these and other cases, the law has, in turn, influenced Muslim-American identity. As Muslim Americans have sought protection from discrimination and intervention in their family affairs, they have associated themselves with and often put their faith in the American dream of liberty and justice for everyone.

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### Lebanese civil war (1975–1990)

In 1975, the Middle Eastern nation of Lebanon descended into what would become a 15-year civil war. The war was partly a result of the failure of what was called a “confessionalist” system of government, which set strict guidelines for the political representation of the country’s various religious groups—Christians (Maronite and Greek Orthodox), Muslim (Shi’a and Sunni), and Druze. This scheme had heavily favored Christians, who had once been in the majority but were rapidly losing their demographic advantage. This failure made the country ripe for violent conflict when it combined with the expansionist desires of Syria to the north and the volatile presence of Palestinian refugees, many of them committed to resistance against Israel, Lebanon’s southern neighbor. In the first two years of the civil war alone, 60,000 Lebanese were killed. A defining point came in 1982 when a full-scale Israeli invasion and occupation divided the country. This added to the exodus of Lebanese seeking safety outside of their home country. Subsequent immigration to the United States shaped the Lebanese-American Muslim community’s religious balance, their religious and political participation, their relationship to one another, and their relationship to American society as a whole.

Lebanese, called Syrians at the time, had entered the United States in noticeable numbers since the late 1800s. After the Immigration Act of 1965 liberalized U.S. immigration policy, even larger numbers—more than 90,000—arrived between 1965 and 1992. This was largely due to the civil war, with peak arrivals after the war began in 1976–77 and a drastic increase in 1983—after the Israeli invasion.

As a consequence of the increase in population of Lebanese in the United States fleeing the civil war, there was a significant shift in their religious makeup. The new immigrants arriving were mostly Muslim, particularly after 1982, when Israel invaded Lebanon. What had once been a vast Christian majority in the Lebanese-American community had now been reduced to an even split with Lebanese Muslims, both Shi’a and Sunni, during the civil war. This shift was especially obvious in greater DETROIT, where Arab Americans had long had a visible presence.

In Dearborn, Michigan, an area neighboring Detroit, the increased Shi’a presence could be most readily noted

in the increase from one to three Shi'a mosques during the 1980s. The mosques' approaches to RELIGIOUS LIFE were also shaped by the civil war. Many towns and villages in Lebanon had become open to outside influences during the chaos of war and sought protection and inspiration from the newly formed Islamic Republic of Iran—which had undergone a revolution in 1979—and its agents in Lebanon, Hezbollah.

The new Michigan mosques partly reflected this inspiration, requiring what they considered stricter guidelines for religious DRESS, PRAYER, and fasting than what the local community had practiced in the pre-civil war era. Some Muslims embraced this politicization of their religious community in response to the Lebanese civil war, even without specifically endorsing Hezbollah or other political and religious groups. For example, some began equating sin with the betrayal of the national cause or leading people astray. Still others resisted this politicization by either refusing to attend the local mosques or attending both old and new, to show their neutrality. Nonetheless, the overall trend was clear: A majority surveyed responded that the civil war had increased their religiosity, with half noting that they had lost relatives killed in the war.

Relations within the Arab community in Detroit and the rest of the United States continued to shift, along with the changing allegiance in the civil war. Some Lebanese Muslims left the south end of Dearborn for the northeast district, partly to avoid living in proximity to Palestinians who had recently become enemies in Lebanon. The collaboration of Israeli and Maronite Christian forces in the war, notably during the massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps Sabra and Shatila in 1983, further increased the strain between Lebanese Christian and Muslim groups in the United States. Lebanese groups of different faiths in Dearborn, which had met monthly before the war, ceased contact. Not until 1989 did relations resume between Maronite Christians and Shi'a Muslims.

Yet the massacres and the war galvanized many Arab-American organizations into action. Some, such as the Lebanon Emergency Committee in New York, were oriented toward assisting victims of the civil war, while others organized petitions, vigils, and protest meals, as well as lobbying Congress to find a path to peace. Some organizations, like that of the American Druze Political Action Committee, specifically lobbied to correct what they saw as the bias of the U.S. government toward Maronites.

Many ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS realized quickly that the civil war and its fallout caused increasing negative stereotyping of the Muslim world by some Americans. Many Americans' only images of Lebanon or Arabs came from televised scenes of bombed-out cities—especially Beirut, the capital—or Arab terrorists in popular FILM in the 1980s. This trend became particularly apparent after the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, which killed

more than 200 Americans and led to U.S. withdrawal from the nation. Muslim-American schoolchildren experienced increased taunting and name-calling and attacks on their religion in school. Arab Americans joined groups like the AMERICAN-ARAB ANTI-DISCRIMINATION COMMITTEE to combat prejudice. However, they often found themselves unable to support publicly specific groups like the Palestine Liberation Organization after the U.S. media began representing them as terrorists. Even so, many Lebanese-American Muslims had their previous indifference to politics transformed into deep and impassioned involvement in the effort to end the war and to stand up for their religion and culture.

Until it ended in 1990, the Lebanese civil war dominated the concerns of Lebanese Americans, with 90 percent reporting anxiety about the war in one Michigan study. These worries had transferred for some into internal conflict in the United States, though others hoped to leave the factional fighting behind. Many found that the war forced them to confront society's growing prejudice, often by coming together as Arab Americans rather than as a specific nationality or religious group. In the postwar era, the Lebanese community's makeup was drastically changed, with Lebanese Muslims represented in far greater numbers than ever before.

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### lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Muslims

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, or LGBT, Muslims are among the most discriminated against members of the Muslim community. One of the difficulties Muslim Americans in the LGBT community have faced is their relatively small representation. LGBT Muslim Americans are a minority within a minority. It has been estimated that between 5 and 10 percent of any human community is gay or lesbian. A smaller proportion is generally considered bisexual or transgendered. Like other religious communities, the majority of Muslims have historically viewed homosexual, bisexual, and transgender identities as taboo or forbidden. Many LGBT Muslim Americans have responded to such prejudice by remaining "in the closet," choosing not to disclose their sexual orientation to their communities or families.



Perhaps the greatest source of contention between pro- and anti-LGBT Muslim Americans is the interpretation of the QUR'AN and the Sunna, the traditions of the PROPHET MUHAMMAD. Among disputed Qur'anic verses concerning homosexuality is the story of Lut, known more commonly to Jews and Christians as Lot. Lut's narrative in the seventh chapter, verses 80 and 81 of the Qur'an, alludes to the destruction of two ancient cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, because of a great sin of which they refused to repent. Although LGBT detractors often state that the sin resulting in the destruction of the two cities was sodomy, supporters counter that the people's sin was inhospitality. Similar disagreements have occurred over the condition of the gay and lesbian soul. Detractors argue that accepting homosexuality is equivalent to rejecting Allah.

Popular global Muslim perspectives of LGBT Muslims have been very mixed and controversially charged by their nature. In the United States, many if not most Muslims have preached that homosexual behaviors and "lifestyles" are incompatible with Islam. For example, MUZAMMIL H. SIDDIQI, an official of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA), has described homosexuality as a moral disorder and sin. Other organizations, however, have been more supportive of the LGBT Muslim community, and some have been created to help LGBT Muslims come to terms and cope with their orientations.

Many Muslim Americans, like other Americans of faith, often stress the importance of marriage and children in religious life. In response to these religious and cultural expectations, some homosexual men and women have opted for marriages of convenience. The few gay and lesbian Muslims who consciously and intentionally marry a differently gendered gay or lesbian person are able to meet the expectations of their families, while also avoiding sexual contact with their spouse. Although the prevalence of these relationships is difficult to assess, the *Washington Post* found nearly 400 marriage-of-convenience requests on a singles Web site in 2006.

Muslim Americans committed to challenging homophobia in Muslim America have formed several activist groups, including the New York-based Al-Fatiha Foundation. Founded in 1998 by Faisal Alam, Al-Fatiha was created to meet the needs of LGBT Muslims who felt isolated from others but wished to affirm both their sexual and their religious orientations. Offering a variety of resources and services, including asylum support, human rights advocacy, and interfaith work, Al-Fatiha has held annual conferences to address issues of religion and LGBT identity, in addition to offering LGBT Muslims an opportunity to socialize in a safe space. Sixty people attended the organization's first NEW YORK CITY conference in 1999, and annual conferences have been held subsequently in ATLANTA, Georgia, and London, England.

The increased public scrutiny of Muslim Americans after SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, brought additional attention to

LGBT Muslim Americans. Popular discussions of Islamic reform and renewal in Muslim and non-Muslim communities, for example, catapulted Muslim lesbian activist Irshid Manji to the public's attention. Her book, *The Trouble with Islam: A Muslim's Call for Reform in Her Faith* (2004) has since been printed in almost 30 languages. Manji's criticism of homophobia in the Muslim community became linked in some readers' minds to what they regarded as the generally conservative nature of Islamic religion and Muslim adherents.

In October 2005, the Silk Road Theatre Project, a CHICAGO-based organization dedicated to the promotion of multiculturalism, staged the play *Ten Acrobats in an Amazing Leap of Faith*, by Yussef El Guind. In it, a typical Muslim-American family discusses homosexuality alongside other community concerns, including atheism and arranged marriages. It was met with a mixed response from the primarily Muslim audience and reproof by the local COUNCIL ON ISLAMIC-AMERICAN RELATIONS (CAIR) chapter, which criticized the play's openness to homosexuality and its criticism of arranged marriages. According to Ahmed Rehab from CAIR, the play had little relevance to Muslim-American life.

Despite such lingering prejudice against LGBT Muslims, there have been recent trends toward more mainstream acceptance. For example, the NATION OF ISLAM invited LGBT Muslims to participate in their Millions More Movement March held in Washington, D.C., on October 15, 2005. Various progressive Muslim-American sites on the INTERNET have openly embraced the struggle against homophobia. Younger Muslim Americans, like younger Americans more generally, are far more likely than older ones to befriend and support LGBT persons in their struggle against discrimination.

The advent in the 21st century of Web-based digital tools enabling instantaneous, anonymous networking coincided with an exponential increase in the number of voices publicly discussing "minority" orientations of all kinds. For example, Yahoo!Groups, an online forum that enables users to create groups whose membership is based on mutual interest or affiliation, plays host to dozens of online communities. Al-Fatiha created 30 such groups based on members' domiciles. Similar groups, such as "TransMuslims," created in 2001, arose relating to transgender Muslims. In its first decade of operation, TransMuslims had almost 600 active members and a monthly average of 80 posts.

Another Web site called Queer Jihad has had similar aspirations. Created in June 1998 by Sulayman X, also known as Sulayman Muhammad, Queer Jihad was intended to be a resource for LGBT Muslims to cultivate self-understanding and self-acceptance, as well as to find other members of the community with whom they could relate. Over the past decade, contributors have added dozens of essays and articles relating to each other under a number of subject headers

including spirituality and how Islam relates to homosexuality. Using such sources of networking and communication, LGBT Muslim Americans have developed a much greater capacity to confront prejudice and discrimination.

Kim Dieser

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### Lewis, Samuel (1896–1971) *mystic and religious teacher*

Known to his followers as Murshid Samuel L. Lewis, Murshid S.A.M. (Sufi Ahmad Murad), Ahmad Murad Chisti, or simply Sufi Sam, Samuel L. Lewis was born into a Jewish family in San Francisco on October 18, 1896. He first became acquainted with Sufism in 1919 through a disciple of the Indian Muslim musician, and first teacher of Sufism in America, INAYAT KHAN (1882–1927), and in 1923 he was formally initiated into the Sufi path by Inayat Khan himself. Besides his study of Sufism, during this period Lewis also trained in Zen Buddhism under the Japanese-American Zen master Nyogen Senzaki. In 1956, Lewis traveled to Asia, studying Zen, Yoga, and Sufism under a series of Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim teachers in Japan, Thailand, India, Pakistan, and elsewhere, as well as receiving formal initiation into a number of Sufi orders. In 1960, he traveled to Egypt, where he was initiated into the Rifa'i Sufi Order and the SHADHILI SUFI ORDER.

Returning to the United States in 1962, Lewis began to develop a spiritual practice that combined elements of Sufism with Buddhist and Hindu meditative practices. Central to this system were his "Sufi dances and walks," which later came to be known as the Dances of Universal Peace. Lewis's "dances" took the form of communal meditative exercises in which rhythmic bodily motion was used in combination with MUSIC, controlled breathing exercises, and repetition of mystical formulas to bring about a change in the spiritual state of participants. Spurred on by the increasing popularity of these rituals, in 1966 Lewis began initiating disciples, known as *mureeds*, among the hippies of the San Francisco Bay Area, laying the groundwork for what would eventually become the Sufi Islamia Ruhaniat Society (SIRS). Like the other Sufi movements that sprang from the universalizing teachings of INAYAT KHAN, Lewis did not require his disciples to adhere

to Islamic ritual and legal norms. For Lewis, as expressed throughout his writings, all the world's great religious traditions pointed to the same cosmic truth.

In 1968, Lewis and his disciples began a cooperative affiliation with the Sufi Order then directed by VILAYAT INAYAT KHAN (1916–2004), the son and successor to Lewis's former teacher Inayat Khan. This affiliation, however, was eventually strained by disagreements that emerged between the two groups following Lewis's death. The final break between Lewis's disciples, then under the leadership of Moineddin Jablonski, and the Sufi Order came in 1977, when Vilayat Inayat Khan issued an injunction against the use of drugs such as LSD. Samuel Lewis died at the Chinese Hospital of San Francisco on January 15, 1971, and his body was taken to the Lama Foundation, a Sufi-inspired New Age center founded by Stephen (Noorudeen) and Barbara (Noura) Durkee in the late 1960s near San Cristobal, New Mexico. In traditional Sufi fashion, his gravesite soon became a place of pious visitation for former disciples and others seeking the blessing, or *baraka*, believed to accrue to the tomb of a departed Sufi saint. In 2002, SIRS was renamed SUFI RUHANIAT INTERNATIONAL.

Erik S. Ohlander

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### Lindh, John Philip Walker (1981– ) "American Taliban"

In 2001, John Philip Walker Lindh, a U.S. citizen, joined the Taliban, an Islamic group that controlled most of Afghanistan between 1996 and the U.S. invasion in 2001. When the United States declared a "war on terrorism" in the wake of the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, it launched military operations against the Taliban regime, which had granted safe haven to al-Qaeda. U.S. forces captured Lindh and designated him an enemy combatant.

John Lindh was born in WASHINGTON, D.C., on February 9, 1981. His parents, Frank and Marilyn Lindh, were observant Roman Catholics. John spent his childhood in Silver Spring, Maryland, while his father completed law school and began his career. In 1991, Frank Lindh joined a law firm in San Francisco, California. The family moved to San Anselmo in Marin County, 20 miles north of San Francisco.

As a student, John suffered from chronic poor health, which often kept him out of school. In 1993, his parents decided to educate him at home with the help of a tutor. In 1995, Lindh entered Tamiscal High School, a progressive school in which students followed a demanding curriculum at their own pace.

Lindh became interested in Islam at the age of 16 after considerable exploration of the religion on the INTERNET. He had read the *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, so it is possible that the book's famous account of Malcolm's pilgrimage moved him with its vision of the brotherhood of all humanity before a single God. Lindh's subsequent religious explorations suggest that he also sought intellectual rigor and self-discipline.

Once he had chosen Islam, he dedicated himself completely to the study of his new faith. In 1997, he formally converted to Islam at the Islamic Center of Mill Valley, California. He also earned a GED (the equivalent of a high school diploma) and withdrew from school. He adopted Islamic DRESS, grew a beard, and changed his name to Suleyman al-Faris. His parents supported his decision, driving him to the mosque for PRAYER on Fridays and allowing him to spend Christmas away from home at the mosque. Within a year of his conversion, Lindh began to study ARABIC in Yemen, where he believed the local dialect was closest to the Arabic of the QUR'AN. He traveled to Yemen hoping to immerse himself in a completely Islamic society.

At the age of 17, Lindh enrolled at the Yemen Language Center, a secular school in Sanaa, Yemen. The school did not provide the immersion in Islam that Lindh sought. Disappointed by the pace of instruction, the religious laxity of some Yemeni Muslims, and the free socializing of male and female students, Lindh left the Language Center and joined the Jami'a al-Iman (University of the Faith).

While at Jami'a al-Iman, Lindh encountered Muslims from many countries, including some who had fought in Kashmir and Afghanistan. He read Abdullah Assam's *Join the Caravan* (1987), which called for the liberation of all Muslim lands from foreign occupation, and *Defense of the Muslim Lands: The First Obligation after Faith* (1979), which urged Muslims worldwide to defend oppressed Muslims in Afghanistan. Despite a growing interest in joining these struggles, Lindh returned to the United States in spring 1999 to visit his parents, who had just divorced. He spent nine months at home in California, then returned to Yemen at the beginning of October 2000 to continue his studies.

On November 30, 2000, Lindh enrolled in a religious school in Bannu, Pakistan, that focused on memorizing the Qur'an. He became increasingly committed to joining the armed struggle on behalf of oppressed Muslims. Through contacts in Bannu, Lindh entered a training camp of the Pakistani-based Harkat ul-Mujaheddin, a paramilitary group

that, according to the U.S. Department of State, attempted to undermine Indian control in the disputed region of Kashmir through violent means. At the camp, Lindh learned basic weapons skills and guerrilla tactics. At the end of his training, however, he chose to fight not in Kashmir but in Afghanistan.

In the summer of 2001, Lindh joined the Taliban, which was fighting the Northern Alliance (the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan, an umbrella organization of various Afghan groups) for control of Afghanistan. He had heard accounts of the Northern Alliance massacring, raping, and torturing civilians. In the guerrilla training camp in Pakistan, the Taliban had a reputation as champions of an original, pure Islam fighting for a religiously correct social order.

The Taliban's image in the United States was quite different. In March 2001, the Taliban had captured American media attention by destroying the Buddhas of Bamiyan, two enormous statues of the Buddha carved into the side of a cliff and dating from 507 C.E. Contextualizing the destruction of this cultural treasure, the American media portrayed the Taliban as barbaric. According to these reports, the Taliban suppressed traditional Afghan culture, including kite flying and MUSIC; it oppressed WOMEN, denying them EDUCATION, employment, and even HEALTH CARE. Religious police beat men without beards and women who did not cover their faces and bodies completely. The Taliban killed civilians, especially Shi'a Muslims and others whom it considered apostates from true Islam. In 1998, the Taliban massacred 8,000 people in the city of Mazar-i-Sharif, leaving the dead unburied. The press also noted that the Taliban was allied with the terrorist organization al-Qaeda, which had been implicated in the WORLD TRADE CENTER BOMBING OF 1993.

The Taliban placed Lindh in an Arabic-speaking unit because he could not understand the local languages. Lindh's unit took up a defensive position in the province of Takhar. According to Lindh's account, he never fired his weapon. Meanwhile, the political situation changed. Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the United States entered the Afghan conflict to depose the Taliban. On October 7, 2001, the United States bombed Lindh's unit, and the Northern Alliance overran them.

After a series of retreats, Lindh's unit surrendered to Northern Alliance forces on November 24, 2001. The Northern Alliance drove them to the fortress of Qala-i-Janghi, where Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officers were to interrogate them about their possible links to al-Qaeda. As the Northern Alliance disarmed the Taliban, one Taliban fighter pulled out a hand grenade, killing himself and two alliance commanders. The alliance fighters locked the remaining Taliban in the basement of the fortress, tossing a hand grenade in after them.

The Taliban prisoners, some of whom were still armed, included men from many different regions, speaking different languages. Some of them spent the night planning an uprising. The next morning, CIA agents Mike Spann and Dave Tyson singled out Lindh as an English-speaker, although they did not recognize him as an American. During a brief interrogation, Spann told Lindh that the Taliban were terrorists who killed fellow Muslims and urged him to leave them. Lindh did not warn the officers of the planned uprising. In federal court Lindh would maintain that he knew nothing of the plan. During the uprising, which lasted seven days, Mike Spann was killed.

Malnourished, with a bullet in his leg and several shrapnel wounds, Lindh remained in the basement during the uprising. Eventually the basement was filled with wounded and dying, but a few armed Taliban still defended the entrance. They killed Red Cross workers who entered the basement to recover the wounded. After dropping more grenades into the basement, the Northern Alliance filled it with water to drive the fighters out. Lindh spent 20 hours up to his waist in water filled with rotting corpses and human excrement before he was taken prisoner by members of the Northern Alliance and a dozen Green Berets on December 1, 2001. A reporter from the cable news station CNN recognized him as an American. During an interview, Lindh attempted to explain his situation. He condemned the Taliban fighters who had faked their surrender in what he characterized as a violation of the Islamic teaching never to break a contract. He also asserted that martyrdom was the goal of every true Muslim.

Lindh was turned over to U.S. Marines, who kept him blindfolded and handcuffed as they transported him to Camp Rhino, just south of Kandahar, Afghanistan. The marines wrote "shit head" on his blindfold and joked about executing him. At the camp, they cut away his clothes and attached him to a stretcher with duct tape. They left him that way for two days. On the third day, he was dressed in a hospital gown for his interrogation by the FBI. On January 23, 2002, Lindh was returned to Washington, D.C., under heavy guard and formally placed under arrest.

On February 5, 2002, a federal grand jury indicted Lindh on 10 charges, including conspiracy to murder U.S. citizens, conspiracy to supply material assistance to al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and carrying firearms during crimes of violence. If convicted on all counts, Lindh faced three life sentences. He pled not guilty on February 13. The government's case was weak because the defense could plausibly argue that Lindh's confession had been coerced. In a plea bargain, Lindh pled guilty to the charge of carrying weapons during crimes of violence and was sentenced to 20 years in a federal prison.

In a statement to the judge, Lindh asserted that nothing in Islam justified terrorism. He also claimed to have been

ignorant of the Taliban's treatment of women or its killing of civilians. Finally, he repeated that he had no prior knowledge of the uprising at Qala-i-Janghi and no role in CIA officer Spann's death. In an emotional statement to the court, Spann's father argued that anyone associated with al-Qaeda bore responsibility for the attacks of September 11, 2001. He also expressed his belief that his son bore direct responsibility for the uprising because he had not helped Mike Spann, a fellow American.

As an American member of the Taliban, Lindh became the focus of national anxiety about internal subversion and international terrorism in the wake of September 11, 2001. Not only did U.S. forces fail to capture al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, but police were also unable to stop a killer who terrorized the nation by sending anthrax through the mail. At the time, Lindh provided a tangible object for American fears. The extent of his culpability in Mike Spann's death has remained controversial. Lindh's lawyers have asked for commutation of his sentence every year since 2004. In 2008, Lindh's parents asked President George W. Bush, then nearing the end of his term in office, for clemency. The request was denied. After several transfers, Lindh has spent most of his sentence at a federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Sonja Spear

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#### Fiqh Council of North America "Fatwa against Terrorism" (2005)

*In 2005, the Fiqh Council of North America, a group of Muslim-American religious scholars who are experts in shari'a, or Islamic law and ethics, wrote a fatwa, a binding legal interpretation, that denounced terrorism. For these leaders, however, the denunciation of terror was nothing new; they had clearly and unambiguously condemned the al-Qaeda attacks immediately after September 11, 2001, and had done so repeatedly afterward. Yet some non-Muslim Americans felt that Muslim Americans had not done enough to dissociate themselves from terrorism. In response, every major Muslim-American organization and hundreds of mosques joined together on July 28, 2005, to condemn acts of terror committed in the name of Islam. The statement rejected the idea that terrorists were martyrs for the faith and demanded that all Muslim Americans help the police and FBI apprehend any would-be terrorists.*





In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

The Fiqh Council of North America wishes to reaffirm Islam's absolute condemnation of terrorism and religious extremism.

Islam strictly condemns religious extremism and the use of violence against innocent lives.

There is no justification in Islam for extremism or terrorism. Targeting civilians' life and property through suicide bombings or any other method of attack is *haram*—or forbidden—and those who commit these barbaric acts are criminals, not “martyrs.”

The Qur'an, Islam's revealed text, states: “Whoever kills a person [unjustly] . . . it is as though he has killed all mankind. And whoever saves a life, it is as though he had saved all mankind” (5:32).

Prophet Muhammad said there is no excuse for committing unjust acts: “Do not be people without minds of your own, saying that if others treat you well you will treat them well, and that if they do wrong you will do wrong to them. Instead, accustom yourselves to do good if people do good and not to do wrong (even) if they do evil” (Al-Tirmidhi).

God mandates moderation in faith and in all aspects of life when He states in the Qur'an: “We made you to be a community of the middle way, so that (with the example of your lives) you might bear witness to the truth before all mankind” (2:143).

In another verse, God explains our duties as human beings when He says: “Let there arise from among you a band of people who invite to righteousness, and enjoin good and forbid evil” (3:104).

Islam teaches us to act in a caring manner to all of God's creation. The Prophet Muhammad, who is described in the Qur'an as “a mercy to the worlds” said: “All creation is the family of God, and the person most beloved by God (is the one) who is kind and caring toward His family.”

In the light of the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunna we clearly and strongly state:

1. All acts of terrorism targeting civilians are *haram* (forbidden) in Islam.

2. It is *haram* for a Muslim to cooperate with any individual or group that is involved in any act of terrorism or violence.

3. It is the civic and religious duty of Muslims to cooperate with law enforcement authorities to protect the lives of all civilians.

We issue this fatwa following the guidance of our scripture, the Qur'an, and the teachings of our Prophet Muhammad—peace be upon him. We urge all people to resolve all conflicts in just and peaceful manners.

We pray for the defeat of extremism and terrorism. We pray for the safety and security of our country, the United States, and its people. We pray for the safety and security of all inhabitants of our planet. We pray that interfaith harmony and cooperation prevail both in the United States and all around the globe.

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 Project Islamic HOPE  
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*Source:* Fiqh Council of North America. "Fatwa against Terrorism," July 28, 2005. Available online. URL: <http://www.cair-net.org/downloads/fatwa.htm>. Accessed August 17, 2006.

**Little, Malcolm** See MALCOLM X.

## Los Angeles

Located in Southern California between orange groves and oil wells, the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels and Disneyland, Venice Beach and Bear Mountain, and built near the San Andreas fault, Los Angeles has attracted a city of dreamers who constantly reinvent the past. For more than a century, new immigrants and inspired entrepreneurs, including Muslims, have been drawn to the economic and spiritual opportunities afforded by prosperous defense, tourism, and entertainment industries, though the zoot suit, Watts, and Rodney King riots of the mid- to late 20th century revealed underlying racial and socioeconomic tensions. Lacking a main geographical center, Los Angeles serves as the commercial hub for 22 million people in eight Southern California counties. With more than 3 million residents, Los Angeles is the second-largest city in the United States, and since 1965, it has attracted more Muslim immigrants than any other U.S. city.

As an example of its diversity, the 700,000 students enrolled in the Los Angeles Unified School District in 2006 spoke 91 languages in the classroom. Farsi, the most spoken language in Iran, was the eighth most common in Los Angeles, and ARABIC ranked tenth. Taken together, the languages of South Asia, including Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, and

others, were even more numerous. A half-million Muslims are evenly dispersed across Southern California and are roughly one-third South Asian, one-third African American, and one-third Arab or other in general proportions to the rest of the nation. Statistics are inexact since the census does not measure religion, and city and metropolitan boundaries are in flux. Despite concentrations of African Americans south of downtown, Arabs east of Hollywood, and Iranians in Beverly Hills, this conglomeration of neighborhoods more than a unitary city makes for a competitive and democratic public space.

## THE FIRST MUSLIM LOS ANGELENOS

Muslims from Yemen and Punjab began settling in Southern California following the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. From that time until today, many of these immigrants were agricultural workers who helped harvest Los Angeles's food supply. Little information on this early Muslim community exists, however, as many sources from the late 19th and early 20th centuries did not distinguish among Muslim, Hindi, and Sikh Punjabis. A similar dearth of information characterizes the research on Yemenis, some of whom became U.S. citizens upon serving in the U.S. MILITARY in WORLD WAR I.

In 1954, three supporters of NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD established Temple No. 27, the first public mosque in Los Angeles. Before Temple No. 27 opened its doors at 5606 Broadway, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS in Los Angeles had met in private homes. Los Angeles Muslims entered the national spotlight on April 27, 1962, when the police responded to a burglary call around midnight and shot seven unarmed NOI members, including Korean War veteran Ronald Stokes. The inability of civil rights organizations to unify over the issue of police brutality may have contributed to the Watts riots three years later in August 1965. In 1971, Temple No. 27 relocated to Central Avenue, where a new University of Islam enrolled as many as a thousand students. By 2000, African Americans represented between a quarter and a half of the city's Muslims. In the 21st century, the Masjid Bilal Islamic Center hosted a school for mostly Latina/o children. Naim Shah of Masjid Ibaadillah, a mosque located on 2310 West Jefferson Boulevard, cofounded the ILM Foundation in 1998 to promote community service in low-income neighborhoods. LOUIS FARRAKHAN's Nation of Islam also maintained a meeting space on Crenshaw Boulevard.

## MUSLIM LOS ANGELES SINCE 1965

Most Los Angelino Muslims trace their presence in Los Angeles to the Hart-Celler IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, which loosened restrictions on immigration to the United States. Political unrest in the Middle East and other regions abroad also contributed to the growing Muslim community.

For instance, the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 motivated many elite Iranians to relocate, making Los Angeles the largest Iranian community outside Iran. Representing one-fifth of Beverly Hills, but also spread out across greater Los Angeles, the diverse population of Muslim, Jewish, Armenian, Zoroastrian, Baha'i, Christian, and secular Iranians have become local leaders, while also maintaining an interest in their country of origin. Both religiously observant IRANIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS and secular Muslims have been among their number, though the secular Muslims such as the fashion designer Bijan have captured public attention in Beverly Hills.

Modeled on political successes by the Christian Coalition and Anti-Defamation League, immigrant Muslims in Los Angeles spearheaded a new Muslim-American identity movement in the middle 1990s. The immediate impetus for the movement was the Oklahoma City bombing of 1995. Though the bombing was orchestrated by white Christian separatists, many experts, public officials, and media outlets speculated at first that the bombing had all the characteristics of an Islamic terrorist incident. That stereotypical view prompted Muslim-American leaders to organize more rigorously to combat Islamophobia in the United States. This new movement emphasized religion rather than ethnicity as a more effective way to fight discrimination and secure their rights as Americans. In the 1990s, Muslims in Los Angeles garnered public attention by building mosques and schools and developing political, civil rights, financial, social services, and interfaith organizations to serve Muslim interests.

Muslim Americans formed the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California in 1995 the better to coordinate public efforts and now represents more than 60 mosques. The American Muslim Political Coordinating Council organized Muslim bloc votes in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, then abstained from endorsing particular candidates in 2008 to focus on civil rights. The MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL has lobbied politicians in Washington who compete for Muslim votes. The local chapter of the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS has advocated for Muslims facing religious discrimination and coordinates with local FBI offices on domestic security. It also convinced Paramount to replace the Muslim villains in the 2002 movie *The Sum of All Fears* with neo-Nazis.

Muslims have contributed to other aspects of life in Los Angeles as well. The Lariba Finance House works with the Bank of Whittier to help Muslims obtain SHARI'A-compliant insurance and home and small business loans. In 1996, Muslim medical students from the University of California, Los Angeles, converted an abandoned auto shop on Florence, a block east of Normandie, into the UMMA Community Clinic to provide health care to uninsured non-Muslim workers of mostly Latina/o and African-American heritage.

## THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

By 2010, Los Angeles was home to between 50 and 100 mosques, including a dozen large Islamic centers modeled on locally successful evangelical megachurches. These facilities, which express a variety of architectural styles, require administrators with a broad array of managerial skills. Many have established adjoining schools, day-care centers, cafeterias, soup kitchens, basketball courts, lecture halls, and bookstores. The largest facilities have asked imams to lead daily prayers and oversee religious rituals, while appointing an administrative director to handle day-to-day operations, public relations, and community service.

Because of the important institution building of the 1990s, the necessary alliances and infrastructure were in place to prevent large-scale violence following the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. The effects of the USA PATRIOT ACT on the civil rights of individual Americans have yet to be fully analyzed, though substantial interfaith efforts and outreach to non-Muslims, including frequent invitations to political, legal, and law-enforcement leaders, have reduced the number of individual hate crimes and prevented widespread retaliation on Muslim Americans in Los Angeles. It has also led to post-9/11 coalition building. Japanese-American and Jewish-American organizations joined with Muslim Americans to protest the mass detentions and deportations of Muslims in December 2002.

Since 9/11, mosques across the nation have been encouraged by various national Muslim interest groups to emulate the Los Angeles model of holding regular open houses for non-Muslims. Pioneered by brothers MAHER MUHAMMAD HATHOUT and HASSAN HATHOUT at the Islamic Center of Southern California (ICSC), which was founded in 1961, Los Angeles-area mosques have become well known for opening their doors for school field trips and public seminars. Located in Koreatown in a former insurance warehouse, the ICSC has refused foreign funding and has returned donations made for building improvements, requesting support for educational efforts instead. Such a stance reflects a theological orientation prioritizing social justice over architectural ornamentation. In addition to frequent open houses, fundraisers that include non-Muslims, seminars on such topics as spouse abuse, Earth Day litter cleanup efforts, and walks for breast cancer research have been part of a concerted effort to demonstrate the mainstream values of American Islam. Such events are easier to organize at mosques with larger youth groups and greater English-language fluency.

Meanwhile, other Los Angeles mosques have benefited from foreign funding. The Saudi royal family, for example, donated more than \$1 million to the Masjid Omar ibn al-Khattab near the University of Southern California and the King Fahd Mosque in Culver City, which was praised by former presidents Gerald Ford and George H. W. Bush upon

its dedication in 1998. While purpose-built mosques became the most visible signs of Muslims in the city of Los Angeles, there were actually five times as many suburban, often non-descript storefront mosques located in peripheral business districts. As an example of the prominence of Islam in Los Angeles, the 2006 Eid al-Fitr festival, marking the end of the monthlong fast of Ramadan, was celebrated in both the Los Angeles and Anaheim Convention Centers.

Like NEW YORK CITY, Los Angeles has become one of America's most diverse cities and a major port for international trade that attracts immigrants from all walks of life. Besides its proximity to Mexico, as the gateway to Asia it has attracted the greatest number of Muslim immigrants since 1965. These immigrants from Asia and Africa, along with indigenous African-American Muslims, have led nationwide campaigns to raise the profile of Islam in the United States.

Vincent Biondo

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**Majid, Satti (1883–1963)** *Sudanese missionary to the United States*

By the 1920s, the United States had become home to competing strands of Islamic religion. There is perhaps no better illustration of this religious diversity than the reaction of Sudanese missionary Satti Majid to the teachings of the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, an African-American Muslim group established in CHICAGO in 1925 by NOBLE DREW ALI. Majid's opposition to the Moorish Science Temple anticipated the tensions between immigrant and indigenous, Sunni and non-Sunni forms of Islam that would arise later in the 20th century.

Born in al-Ghaddar, Sudan, in 1883, Satti Majid Muhammad al-Qadi, known more commonly as Satti Majid, memorized the QUR'AN at an early age. Little is known about why he eventually left his native land. Sometime after 1900, Majid traveled to England, then, in 1904, set sail for the United States. He later wrote that he traveled to America to correct the poor image of Islam in the West. Majid likely entered the United States through the port of New Orleans, where dozens of Muslim sailors who served on British merchant ships were disembarking at the time. Whether he stayed in New Orleans is not known. In fact, there is virtually no trace of him until 1921, when he resurfaced in NEW YORK CITY.

Serving as an imam, or religious leader, to Muslim sailors and other visitors stranded in New York during WORLD WAR I, Majid began a lengthy correspondence with the British consulate in the city and the British embassy in Washington, D.C. In his letters, Majid detailed the plight of Yemeni sailors from the city of Aden, which was controlled by the British, whose ships had been sunk by the Germans during the war. They had been unable to find work on other ships and were now poor and hungry. "In the name of humanity and renowned English justice," he wrote, "[I] beg of you . . . to graciously help them in obtaining employment on British steamers." What came of the correspondence is unclear, though Majid's letters establish that by the early 1920s, he had become a leader of Muslim Americans in New York.

Majid's missionary career in the United States in the 1920s is in need of further research, but it seems safe to con-

clude that his influence went beyond New York, as he established a series of benevolent societies devoted to the welfare of Muslims in various U.S. cities. These associations ministered not only to African and Middle Eastern immigrants but to African-American Muslims as well. In 1922, he traveled to DETROIT, where he sought incorporation papers for the benevolent association Moslem Welfare Society. There is also evidence that he established the Moslem Unity Association in New York in 1927. Then, in 1928, he created the African Moslem Welfare Society in Pittsburgh, an event confirmed by a letter from the Pennsylvania secretary of state's office dated January 15, 1928.

During the 1920s, Majid also came in contact with the Moorish Science Temple (MST), and his reaction to this indigenous group of Muslims was apoplectic. According to Majid's Arabic memoir, housed in the National Record Office in Khartoum, Sudan, Majid attempted to contact MST founder Noble Drew Ali and even attempted to sue the MST to "correct" the movement's teachings about Islam. After reading the *Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America*, a sacred text published in 1927 by Ali, he discovered that Ali considered himself a prophet, which was in violation of the Sunni Islamic tradition that Muhammad was the last of God's prophets. Majid wrote to Ali, challenging him to produce a miracle, as other prophets had done, and advised Ali to burn his book. He also tried to contact the government and wrote to various newspapers to correct what he considered to be Ali's errors.

On January 31, 1929, having failed in his attempts to prevent the rapid rise and popularity of the Moorish Science Temple, Majid left New York for Cairo, Egypt, where he hoped to gain the support of Islamic scholars at al-Azhar University for his campaign against Ali. In his letter to this international body of religious scholars, whom many Sunni Muslims considered the authoritative voices of Islam, Majid pointed out that Noble Drew Ali believed himself to be "the prophet promised at the end of time who was announced by Jesus." He also noted that Ali's book contained neither Qur'anic verses nor sayings of the prophet Muhammad.

In November 1931, 78 scholars at al-Azhar responded by both issuing a fatwa, or religious ruling, and creating a translated version of their religious opinion to be distributed in the United States. Signed by Muhammad al-Ahamadi al-Dawahiri, the head of al-Azhar, this document declared Ali to be “an imposter and disbeliever.” Adding that the “truth and clear signs of Islam have been definitively established,” the official translation of the fatwa stated that Ali’s claims “could only be made by an unbeliever or a mentally-deranged person, and only those of like mentality would follow him.”

Majid hoped to gain the support of al-Azhar to become an officially sanctioned Islamic missionary in the United States. But on December 17, 1934, Azhar officials wrote a letter denying Ali’s request. “We declare,” the letter said, “that he does not have the scholarly qualifications to be appointed to a religious mission such as al-Azhar is accustomed to send abroad.” Though Majid’s dream of returning to the United States as an Islamic authority was thwarted, he continued to correspond with his American followers.

Several letters addressed to the “Rev. Magid” and the “Respectable Father Sheikh [sheikh, or leader] of Islam in America” were sent to him by members of the African Welfare Society in Pittsburgh in the 1930s. One letter, dated February 29, 1932, asked for news from Majid, reporting that Pittsburgh followers remained in contact with Muslims in CLEVELAND and New York. Helena Kleely, secretary of the Pittsburgh group, coauthored a letter on May 18, 1932, asking for Majid to provide English translations of the Arabic literature that he had sent. A 1935 letter discussed the Italian occupation of Ethiopia and looked forward to the day when African Americans could “return back to our homeland Africa,” mentioning Abyssinia (Ethiopia) as a place that African Americans could colonize. Several of the writers complained that they had not received prompt replies to their correspondence.

Majid remained in Cairo, still hoping that he might procure the necessary funds to return to the United States and resume his missionary work. Such financial support never materialized, and when he applied for permission to return to the United States in the late 1930s, his request was denied. Majid moved to Sudan in the 1940s after an absence of decades and died in his native land on March 17, 1963.

Though Majid’s impact on the country of his birth seems to have been minimal, the country where he lived for perhaps 25 years was changed as a result of his missionary activities. During the 1920s, his missionary efforts among both immigrant and indigenous Muslims contributed to a burgeoning Sunni Muslim–American community in cities such as Pittsburgh, Cleveland, New York, and Detroit. Like other Sunni Muslim leaders, including Daoud Ahmed Faisal and DUSÉ MOHAMED ALI, Majid served

both immigrant and indigenous Muslims. He was also an uncompromising critic of homegrown American Islam, which he—and other Sunni Muslims after him—could do little to stop.

*Edward E. Curtis IV*

### Further Reading

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### Malcolm X (1925–1965) *religious and political leader*

Thinker, agitator, speaker, and organizer, Malcolm X changed the way that Americans in the 1960s thought about civil rights and the struggle for black liberation. He also influenced the growth and development of Islamic religion among African Americans. Though his life was cut short by assassination, his memory, made popular first through the publication of his autobiography then later by a 1992 film directed by Spike Lee, became a powerful force in American religious and political life.

### CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little on May 19, 1925, in Omaha, Nebraska. His parents—Louise, an immigrant from Grenada, and Earl, an organizer for the Universal Negro Improvement Association—raised him and his seven siblings to value their racial identity. Their defiant stance toward the racism and harsh discrimination against black people in the North led to the first tragedy of Malcolm’s life. After moving to Lansing, Michigan, Earl Little was killed, most likely murdered, in 1931 while Malcolm was still a boy. Malcolm heard rumors his father had died for being too “uppity.”

His mother struggled to raise her eight children in the midst of the GREAT DEPRESSION, and in 1939, she was declared legally insane by state health officials and sent to an asylum. This was the second tragedy of young Malcolm’s life as he spent several years in and out of foster homes, away from his mother and siblings. In his teenage years, Malcolm moved to the East Coast and, from 1940 to 1944, lived in NEW YORK CITY and BOSTON.

In this period, “Detroit Red,” as he was called, joined thousands of black youth who wore zoot suits, danced the lindy hop, and created a youth culture that defied the expectations of their parents and certainly of white Americans. Malcolm entered the underworld, doing drugs, gambling, and hustling to make ends meet. In 1946, he was arrested for stealing, convicted, and committed to the Massachusetts state prison system.

### CAREER IN THE NATION OF ISLAM

In 1947 or 1948, in the Concord Reformatory, Malcolm converted to Islam as taught by ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, leader of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI). He gave up the “slave name” Little for an “X,” which signified his desire for a new identity. A voracious reader and talented prison debater, Malcolm became convinced that the NOI offered the only solution to the problem of racism in America. Paroled in 1952, he quickly established himself as a powerful advocate for Elijah Muhammad’s vision, which called for black people to separate from whites, establish their own businesses and schools, convert to Islam, and practice clean living.

During the middle 1950s, Malcolm became an itinerant preacher and temple organizer, leading the NOI’s effort to establish mosques and build attendance in Boston, PHILADELPHIA, and New York. Known for using sophisticated missionary, or “fishing,” techniques, Malcolm also became known as a principled and brave civil rights leader on the East Coast. In 1957, he organized a NOI-led protest against the treatment of a fellow Muslim who had been beaten by police officers from New York’s 28th precinct. The New York Police Department agreed to Malcolm’s demand that the man receive immediate medical attention, and Malcolm’s fame quickly spread among black Harlemites and New York City officials.

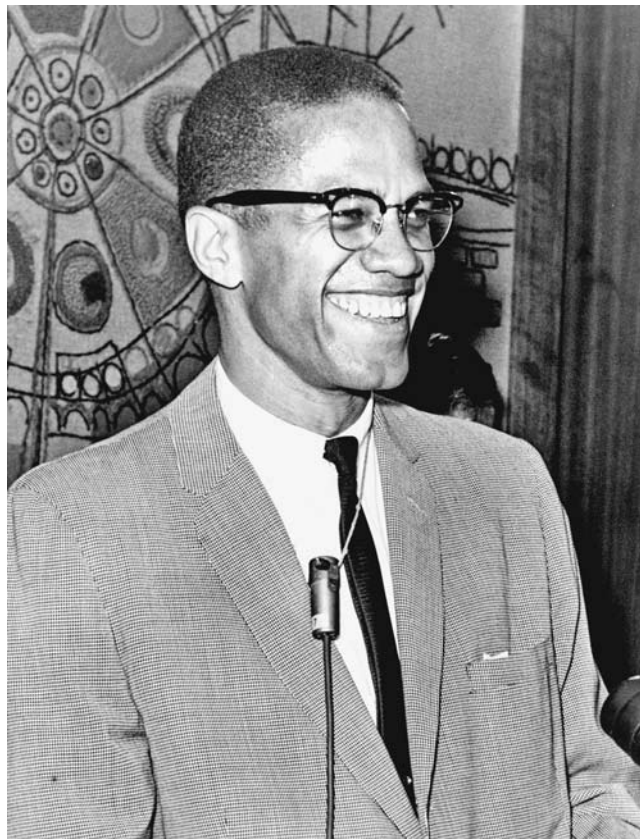
In 1958, Malcolm married the former Betty Sanders, another member of the NOI whom he knew through his work with the temple in Harlem. They had six daughters: Attallah in 1958; Qubilah in 1960; Ilyasah in 1962; Gamilah in 1964; and Malaak and Malikah, twins born after Malcolm’s death in 1965.

In 1959, WCBS-TV news reporter Mike Wallace introduced Malcolm X to the nation in an exposé entitled “The Hate the Hate Produced.” Offering an explanation of the NOI’s appeal echoed by both white and black liberals, including the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and scholar C. Eric Lincoln, Wallace depicted the NOI as the sad, dysfunctional product of poor American race relations. The NOI became a symbol of the need for stronger civil rights legislation that would guarantee legal equality.

Handsome, fiery, and articulate, Malcolm became a favorite on various TV and radio shows in the early 1960s. Attacked by whites and those whom Malcolm called “Uncle Tom Negroes,” he was Elijah Muhammad’s most committed defender and spokesman. He rejected the idea of racial integration with the “white devil,” instead telling African Americans to rely only on themselves for their salvation. An uncompromising critic of racism, Malcolm’s critics called him the “angriest Negro in America.”

### BREAKING AWAY

Among Elijah Muhammad’s critics were AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS and Muslim immigrants from abroad who rejected



Born Malcolm Little, Malcolm X became a central figure in the civil rights era. Converting to Islam first as a member of the Nation of Islam in the late 1940s, he became a Sunni Muslim in 1964, went on pilgrimage to Mecca, and changed his name to El Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. He was assassinated in 1965.

(Library of Congress)

the NOI’s doctrinal teachings about the divinity of W. D. FARD and Elijah Muhammad’s status as a prophet. The same foreign Muslim students who would support the founding of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION in 1963 confronted Malcolm along the college lecture circuit, trying to protect the image of Islam, as they understood it, from the likes of Elijah Muhammad.

In 1963, though Malcolm stalwartly defended Elijah Muhammad against his critics in the *New York Times Magazine*, it was already clear that he was questioning certain elements of NOI teachings. During March 3 and May 12 media appearances in Chicago and Washington, Malcolm said, for example, that whites were not devils because of who they were—that is, their genes—but because of what they did—that is, their abuse of black people.

When later that year it was discovered that Elijah Muhammad, who preached sexual restraint and monogamy, had fathered several children with his young secretaries, Malcolm rebelled. On December 1, 1963, he disobeyed



Muhammad's directive that all NOI ministers remain silent on the November 22, 1963, assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Speaking to the press, Malcolm said that the murder was the "chickens coming home to roost."

On December 4, 1963, the NOI suspended Malcolm from his duties as a spokesman for Elijah Muhammad. Three months later, on March 8, 1964, Malcolm officially announced his independence from Muhammad at the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York. He revealed his plan to create a new mosque called Muslim Mosque, Inc., and at a speech at Harvard University on March 18, he stated that black nationalism was still needed to solve the problem of racism.

### THE FINAL YEAR

Reaching out to immigrant and foreign Muslims who had previously criticized him, Malcolm sought to learn more about Sunni Islam. On April 13, 1964, after making connections with supporters of the Muslim World League, a Saudi-financed missionary organization, Malcolm set out on the pilgrimage to Mecca, a journey movingly described in his autobiography. Becoming an official guest of the Saudi Arabian state, Malcolm was overwhelmed by the hospitality of his hosts, including Prince Faysal, who granted him an audience.

During his pilgrimage, Malcolm adopted a new name: El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. Like many who performed the hajj, Malcolm took on the honorific title hajji, or one who has made the pilgrimage. He translated Malcolm to Malik and embraced a new last name, Shabazz, after the black tribe of Shabazz that Elijah Muhammad had taught originally inhabited Mecca. Though non-Muslims would continue to refer to him as Malcolm X, many Muslim Americans, especially African-American Sunni Muslims, used his new name henceforth as a sign of respect and recognition.

As he circumambulated the Ka'ba in Mecca and performed the other rituals of the hajj, Malcolm was exposed to the multiracial nature of the worldwide community of Muslims. He wrote to his wife Betty and his followers, sharing the news that he had broken bread with blue-eyed, white Muslims. He praised Islam's ability to create racial equality and unity among its believers. Islam, he said, seemed to erase racial prejudice from the hearts of human beings.

Though Malcolm no longer believed that the white man was literally the devil, a teaching that he had already started to question publicly long before his official break with Elijah Muhammad, he remained convinced that America was a racist, inhospitable country for black people. On Mt. Arafat, the place from which Muslim pilgrims asked to be forgiven for their sins, Malcolm preached to his fellow Muslims about the "evils and indignities that are suffered by the black man in America." Indeed, though Malcolm was convinced that Islam could rid humanity of racial prejudice and discrimination,

he also said that most blacks and whites in America were unlikely to become Muslims.

He was now committed to the same basic teachings of Islam as his Saudi hosts and other Sunni Muslims around the world, but he disagreed with many of them about the liberating potential of Islamic religion for political life. The problems of black people, he said, "go beyond religion."

Instead, Malcolm looked to sub-Saharan Africa for inspiration to create black self-determination in the United States. From Mecca and Medina, Malcolm flew to Beirut, Lebanon, on April 30, 1964, then to Lagos, Nigeria, on May 8. Two days later, he became a guest of Kwame Nkrumah, president of Ghana. Then he visited Senegal, Morocco, and Algeria. Praising the newly independent African states and basking in a welcome that went, as he wrote, "beyond words," Malcolm said that African Americans must join the movement of formerly colonized peoples in Africa and Asia for true independence.

Finally returning home on May 21, 1964, Malcolm became a leading advocate of pan-Africanism, the movement to unite all people of African descent in a common struggle for economic, political, and social liberation. On June 28, he established the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU), which was to cooperate with the Organization of African Unity. Malcolm asked his allies from abroad to help him convince the United Nations to take up the cause of African Americans.

During the spring and summer, Malcolm and former colleagues in the NOI, including Minister LOUIS FARRAKHAN, traded jabs about his break from the movement. Malcolm publicly criticized his mentor, Elijah Muhammad, and Muhammad's followers responded by calling Malcolm a hypocrite. Malcolm's friends advised him to leave the country again because of the death threats he was receiving. On July 6, he left for Cairo, and there, on July 17, 1964, attended the African Summit Conference as a representative of his OAAU. He remained in Cairo through August, meeting with Egyptian officials, including the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs, which granted him 20 scholarships so that some of his followers could study at the University of al-Azhar, one of most prestigious seminaries in the Islamic world.

In September, Malcolm performed an *'umra*, or lesser pilgrimage, to Mecca, where he was hosted by the Muslim World League and offered training as a Muslim missionary. Malcolm maintained throughout this period that "my fight is two-fold, my burden is double, my responsibilities multiple." He meant to be both a Muslim leader and a black leader in the United States and saw these tasks as complementary but separate. African Americans would not convert to Islam en masse, he maintained, and he must find other tools in the struggle for freedom besides Islam.

After traveling to sub-Saharan Africa another time and meeting with 11 heads of state, Malcolm finally returned to New York on November 24, 1964. For the next couple of months, Malcolm maintained his usual frenetic schedule, giving speeches at various colleges and making a number of public appearances. He also attempted to nurture the growth of the OAAU and the Muslim Mosque and welcomed the placement of a Saudi-funded missionary in his nascent Muslim religious community. Surprisingly few donations, however, were forthcoming during a series of February talks in New York, and Malcolm worried about the future of these organizations.

### HIS ASSASSINATION AND HIS LEGACY

Malcolm's life ended before this phase of his career could flower. On February 21, 1965, former NOI member Talmadge Hayer gunned down Malcolm as he was making a speech at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem; Norman 3X Butler and Thomas 15X Johnson were also convicted for the murder, though they—and Hayer—maintained their innocence over the next three decades. Though Elijah Muhammad was never accused of the murder, Louis Farrakhan (who later formed his own version of the Nation of Islam) apologized in 2000 for helping to create the poisonous atmosphere that led to Malcolm's death.

Many African Americans believed that the FBI was complicit in the assassination. While the FBI defended itself against such charges, it is possible, if not probable that the FBI knew about the assassination and did nothing to stop it. Malcolm, like other black nationalist leaders of the time, was officially designated as an enemy of the state, and the FBI kept a close watch on him, as his FBI file makes clear. In addition to running surveillance on Malcolm, the FBI also had informants and even agents inside the NOI, a fact that has led many scholars to conclude that the FBI may have had information about the plots against his life.

If the assassins hoped to silence Malcolm's voice, however, they failed. In many ways, Malcolm became more powerful in death than he was in life. Only months after his assassination, journalist Alex Haley, his coauthor, released *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, which, along with Franz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*, became a manifesto of the Black Power movement in the late 1960s. Malcolm was also adopted as the patron saint of young black leaders such as JAMIL ABDULLAH AL-AMIN, who, rejecting the middle-class Civil Rights movement, focused on the problems of black poverty, police violence, and extralegal discrimination.

Echoing Malcolm's simultaneous focus on local activism and international vision, these Black Power advocates rejected the legitimacy of the American nation-state, opposed the Vietnam War, armed themselves against police violence, fed the poor, and opened schools, all the while celebrating their

history and heritage as people of African descent. Malcolm's image would remain potent in black American culture for the rest of the 20th century.

Malcolm's legacy for Muslims in the United States was similarly profound. African-American Sunni Muslims, or those who became Sunnis, were inspired by Malcolm's journey from the Nation of Islam to Sunni Islam. Seeing in him someone who triumphed over adversity and found the truth, Muslims in the United States adopted Malcolm as a model. W. D. MOHAMMED, leader of the NOI after Elijah Muhammad's death in 1975, named Temple No. 7 after Malcolm to honor his contributions to the movement.

But Malcolm's legacy was also relevant to the American people as a whole. His life had exposed the failures of a Civil Rights movement that, as Martin Luther King, Jr., admitted in the middle 1960s, put its hopes primarily in legal equality and voting rights. Malcolm taught that economic, social, and psychological reforms were all essential elements in the struggle for equality. Conservatives, liberals, and leftists alike would echo his views by the 1970s.

Malcolm X also became part of the pantheon of black historical figures who forced America to confront its past as a nation founded as much in slavery as in freedom. Malcolm's dramatic life story, enshrined in his now classic autobiography, echoed the enduring theme that Americans could reinvent themselves in their struggle for self-fulfillment, but reminded readers as well that their individual lives would always be tied to the lives of others.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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### Malcolm X with Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer (1964)

On December 20, 1964, African-American Muslim leader Malcolm X (1925–65), also known as El Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, spoke at a Harlem rally in support of Fannie Lou Hamer, the leader of Mississippi's Freedom Democratic political party. After hearing Hamer recount incidents of discrimination and violence that she had suffered at the hands of whites, Malcolm X rose to address the crowd at the Williams Institutional CME Church in Harlem. Obviously enraged, Malcolm restated his famous cry that blacks must be liberated "by any means necessary." His remarks, given

*approximately two months before his assassination, illustrate his ceaseless campaign in the last year of his life for a unified black response to antiblack violence and oppression. Though he believed that Islam was a religion that guaranteed racial equality, he said that the problems of American racism “went beyond religion” and required an uncompromising political response from people of African descent, wherever they resided.*



When I listen to Mrs. Hamer, a black woman—could be my mother, my sister, my daughter—describe what they had done to her in Mississippi, I ask myself how in the world can we ever expect to be respected as men when we will allow something like that to be done to our women, and we do nothing about it? How can you and I be looked upon as men with black women being beaten and nothing being done about it, black children and black babies being beaten and nothing being done about it? No, we don’t deserve to be recognized and respected as men as long as our women can be brutalized in the manner that this woman described, and nothing being done about it, but we sit around singing “We Shall Overcome”. . . .

When I was in Africa, I noticed some of the Africans got their freedom faster than others. Some areas of the African continent became independent faster than other areas. I noticed that in the areas where independence had been gotten, someone got angry. And in the areas where independence had not been achieved yet, no one was angry. They were sad—they’d sit around and talk about their plight, but they weren’t mad. And usually, when people are sad, they don’t do anything. They just cry over their condition.

But when they get angry, they bring about a change. When they get angry, they aren’t interested in logic, they aren’t interested in odds, they aren’t interested in consequences. When they get angry, they realize the condition that they’re in—that their suffering is unjust, immoral, illegal, and that anything they do to correct it or eliminate it, they’re justified. When you and I develop that type of anger and speak in that voice, then we’ll get some kind of respect and recognition, and some changes from these people who have been promising us falsely already for far too long.

So you have to speak their language. The language that they were speaking to Mrs. Hamer was the language of brutality. Beasts, they were,

beating her. . . . And when you and I begin to look at him and see the language he speaks, the language of a brute, the language of someone who has no sense of morality, who absolutely ignores law—when you and I learn how to speak his language, then we can communicate. But we will never communicate talking one language while he’s talking another language—and think that he’s going to understand.

Let’s learn his language. If his language is with a shotgun, get a shotgun. Yes, I said if he only understands the language of a rifle, get a rifle. If he only understands the language of a rope, get a rope. But don’t waste time talking the wrong language to a man if you want to really communicate with him. Speak his language—there’s nothing wrong with that. If something was wrong with that language, the federal government would have stopped the cracker from speaking it to you and me. . . .

The brothers and sisters in Mississippi are being beaten and killed for no reason other than they want to be treated as first-class citizens. There’s only one way to be a first-class citizen. There’s only one way to be independent. There’s only one way to be free. It’s not something that someone gives to you. It’s something that you take. Nobody can give you independence. Nobody can give you freedom. Nobody can give you equality or justice or anything. If you’re a man, you take it. If you can’t take it, you don’t deserve it. Nobody can give it to you. So if you and I want freedom, if we want independence, if we want respect, if we want recognition, we obey the law, we are peaceful—but at the same time, at any moment that you and I are involved in any kind of action that is legal, that is in accord with our civil rights, in accord with the courts of this land, in accord with the Constitution—when all of these things are on our side, and we still can’t get it, it’s because we aren’t on our own side.

We don’t yet realize the real price necessary to pay to see that these things are enforced where we’re concerned. And until we realize this, they won’t be enforced where we’re concerned. We have to let the people in Mississippi as well as in Mississippi, New York, and elsewhere know that freedom comes to us either by ballots or by bullets. That’s the only way freedom is gotten. Freedom is gotten by ballots or bullets. These are the only two avenues, the only two roads, the only

two methods, the only two means—either ballots or bullets. And when you know that, then you are careful how you use the word freedom. As long as you think we are going to sing up on some, you come in and sing. I watch you, those of you who are singing—are you also willing to do some swinging?

They've always said that I'm anti-white. I'm for anybody who's for freedom. I'm for anybody who's for justice. I'm for anybody who's for equality. I'm not for anybody who tells me to sit around and wait for mine. I'm not for anybody who tells me to turn the other cheek when a cracker is busting up my jaw. I'm not for anybody who tells black people to be nonviolent while nobody is telling white people to be nonviolent. I know I'm in the church, I probably shouldn't be talking like this—but Jesus himself was ready to turn the synagogue inside out and upside down when things weren't going right. In fact, in the Book of Revelations, they've got Jesus sitting on a horse with a sword in his hand, getting ready to go into action. But they don't tell you or me about that Jesus. They only tell you and me about that peaceful Jesus. They never let you get down to the end of the book. They keep you up there where everything is, you know, nonviolent. No, go and read the whole book, and when you get to Revelations, you'll find that even Jesus' patience ran out. And when his patience ran out, he got the whole situation straightened out. He picked up the sword.

I believe that there are some white people who might be sincere. But I think they should prove it. And you can't prove it to me by singing with me. You can't prove it to me by being nonviolent. No, you can prove it by recognizing the law of justice. And the law of justice is "as ye sow, so shall ye reap." The law of justice is "he who kills by the sword shall be killed by the sword." This is justice. Now if you are with us, all I say is, make the same kind of contribution with us in our struggle for freedom that all white people have always made when they were struggling for their own freedom. You were struggling for your freedom in the Revolutionary War. Your own Patrick Henry said "liberty or death," and George Washington got the cannons out, and all the rest of them that you taught me to worship as my heroes, they were fighters, they were warriors.

But now when the time comes for our freedom, you want to reach back in the bag and

grab somebody who's nonviolent and peaceful and forgiving and long-suffering. I don't go for that—no. I say that a black man's freedom is as valuable as a white man's freedom. And I say that a black man has the right to do whatever is necessary to get his freedom that other human beings have done to get their freedom. I say that you and I will never get our freedom nonviolently and patiently and lovingly. We will never get it until we let the world know that as other human beings have laid down their lives for freedom—and also taken life for freedom—that you and I are ready and willing and equipped and qualified to do the same thing.

It's a shame that Mrs. Hamer came out here this afternoon where there are so few people. It's a shame. All of our people in Harlem should have heard her describe what they did to her down there. Because I think the people in Harlem are more capable of evening the score than people are anywhere else in this country. Yes, they are, and they need to hear her story. They need to know more, first hand, about what's happening down there, especially to our women. And then they need some lessons in tactics and strategy on how to get even. I, for one, will make the first contribution to any fund that's raised for the purpose of evening the score. Whenever someone commits murder, what do you do? You put out a "reward, wanted—dead or alive" for the murderer. Yes, learn how to do it. We've had three people murdered. No reward has been put on the head of the murderer. Don't just put a reward—put "dead or alive, dead or alive." And let that [Ku Klux] Klan know that we can do it tit for tat, tit for tat. What's good for the goose is good for the gander.

And if you all don't want to do it, we'll do it. We'll do it. We have brothers who are equipped, and who are qualified, and who are willing to—As Jesus said, "Little children, go thee where I send thee." We have brothers who can do that, and who will do that, and who are ready to do that. And I say that if the government of the United States cannot bring to justice people who murder Negroes, or people who murder those who are at the forefront fighting in behalf of Negroes, then it's time for you and me to retire quietly to our closets and devise means and methods of seeing that justice is executed against murderers where justice has not been forthcoming in the past.



I say in my conclusion that if you and I here in Harlem, who form the habit oftentimes of fighting each other, who sneak around trying to wait for an opportunity to throw some acid or some lye on each other, or sprinkle dist on each other's doorsteps—if you and I were really and truly for the freedom of our people, we wouldn't waste all of that energy thinking how to do harm to each other. Since you have that ingenuity, if you know how to do it, let me know; I'll give you some money and show you where to go, and show you who to do it to. And then you'll go down in history as having done an honorable thing.



Source: "With Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer." *Malcolm X Speaks*, edited by George Breitman. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990, pp. 107–108, 111–114.

**Mamout, Yarrow (Mamout Yarrow or Mahmoud Yaro) (ca. 1736–1823)** *slave, entrepreneur, portrait subject*

Yarrow Mamout, a Muslim born around 1736 in what is now the West African nation of Guinea, was possibly of Fulbe (Fulani) lineage. Literate in ARABIC and trained in Islamic studies, Mamout was captured and brought to America as a slave when he was approximately 14 years old. Purchased by Samuel Beall (or Bell) of Montgomery County, Maryland, Mamout was later inherited by Samuel's son, Brooke. He worked for the Beall family for nearly the entire second half of the 18th century; Brooke Beall promised Mamout his freedom when he finished making bricks for a new house in Georgetown, a neighborhood of Washington, D.C.

According to a report in *A Chorographical and Statistical Description of the District of Columbia* (1816), Mamout told General John Mason of Analostan Island (now Theodore Roosevelt Island), located in the Potomac River in Washington, D.C., in 1811 that he had convinced Beall that his working days were over: "Olda massa been tink he got all de work out of a Yaro bone. He tell a Yaro, go free Yaro; you been work nuff for me, go work for you now," Mamout said. Brooke Beall died before the house was completed, but Margaret Beall, his widow, freed Mamout, as promised, in 1796.

Within four years of gaining his freedom, Yarrow purchased a house and lot in what is now Dent Place in Georgetown. He saved enough money to secure his retirement, hiring himself out in the day for wages, then weaving baskets and nets at night. According to Mamout, "Yaro work a soon, a late, a hot, a cold. Sometime he sweat. Sometime

he blow a finger." Twice he saved \$100 for his retirement and entrusted it to ship captains. Each time the money was lost—one captain died broke and the other went bankrupt. But Yarrow earned another \$200 and, after receiving advice on the matter, put his money in the stock of the Columbia Bank, founded by Alexander Hamilton in 1771. The proceeds allowed him to live in relative comfort to the end of his days.

Much of what is known about Mamout comes from the painter Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827), a renowned portrait painter of prominent politicians, who asked Mamout to sit for his portrait in 1819. Peale was intrigued when he heard a rumor that Mamout was 140 years old. The inflated age seems to have been the product of a cultural misunderstanding. According to Margaret Beall, Yarrow counted his own age based on the ISLAMIC CALENDAR, a lunar calendar, rather than on the Gregorian (solar) calendar—an estimate that likely led to miscalculations. Mamout was in his 80s at the time, according to the Beall estate records.

In producing what has been called one of the most sensitive portraits of an African American in the 19th century, Peale spent two days with Mamout, and spoke to the



Yarrow Mamout was a slave for almost half a century. After gaining his freedom in 1796, he became an entrepreneur, investor, and landholder in Washington, D.C. In 1819, artist Charles Willson Peale painted his portrait. (Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania Collection, The Bridgeman Art Library)

Beall family and others who knew him. Peale wrote in his diary that Mamout had a “good temper,” was a sober man, and “professes to be a mahometan [Muslim].” According to Peale, Mamout was “often seen & heard in the Streets singing Praises to God—and conversing with him.” Mamout told Peale that “man is no good unless his religion comes from the heart.” Though General Mason reported that Mamout would shoot a gun on Christmas day to get a dram of alcohol, Mamout told Peale that “it is no good to eat Hog—and drink whiskey is very bad.”

Peale, whose painting is owned by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, was not the only painter to render a portrait of Mamout. A second, by James Alexander Simpson, hangs in the Peabody Room of the Georgetown Library. The second portrait, completed three years after the Peale painting, is said by critics to be a more lifelike portrait of Mamout since it depicts his clothes as worn and includes more blemishes on his face.

Mamout died on January 19, 1823. According to his obituary, which appeared in the *Gettysburg Compiler* on February 23, 1823, Mamout was buried “in the corner of his garden, the spot where he usually resorted to pray.” He had a son, Aquilla Yarrow, who died in 1832. Yarrow also had a sister whose name was not known. Her daughter, Yarrow’s niece, Nancy Hillman, died in 1843. Yarrow’s name survived into modern times as Aquilla’s wife, Mary (or Polly) Turner Yarrow, was a midwife in the area of Washington County, Maryland, in which she lived. That area, which was named after her, is now known as Yarrowsburg.

*Tahira Abdul-Jalil*

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## marriage

Since the first Muslims arrived as slaves in the Thirteen Colonies, marriage has been a highly meaningful institution among Muslim Americans. Throughout the 20th century, the practices associated with marriage—from how one should meet a spouse to what kind of dress should be worn on the wedding day—became diverse. By the late 20th and early 21st

centuries, marriage was understood inside Muslim-American communities as an overall barometer for the moral character and social vigor of the community, which sought to encourage, protect, and nurture what it long considered to be a vital social institution.

### MARRIAGE ACCORDING TO ISLAMIC SHARI‘A

Historically speaking, marriage in Muslim lands has often been treated as a social institution governed by SHARI‘A, or Islamic LAW and ethics, that involves the making of a legal contract guaranteeing the rights of both husband and wife. According to the shari‘a, MEN may marry non-Muslim women who were “People of the Book,” that is, Christians, Jews, and others. WOMEN were not supposed to marry non-Muslim men, since in Islam the religious identity of children is determined by the religion of the father. Men were allowed to take up to four wives, though they had to treat their wives equally financially, emotionally, and sexually. Women could include in the contract stipulations to secure rights within marriage, including the right to religious DIVORCE, to work outside the home, and to clarify how housework would be shared. Marriage contracts included *mahr*, money that the groom paid to the bride. That money remained hers if her husband divorced her or if she divorced him because he harmed her.

### MUSLIM MARRIAGE IN SLAVERY

One of the earliest Muslim marriages of record in the United States took place in 1794 or 1795 when Muslim slave ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (ca. 1762–1829) married a fellow slave, Isabella, in Natchez, Mississippi. Isabella was Baptist, and together the couple reportedly attended Christian religious services, though Ibrahima seemed to have remained a Muslim. Ibrahima may or may not have been able to choose whether to attend these services, but his attendance explains why his children understood themselves to be Christians rather than Muslims.

Sometime in the late 18th or early 19th century, BILALI OF SAPELO ISLAND (ca. 1760–1859) married a woman named Phoebe and raised a family of 12 sons and seven daughters with her. Bilali was an overseer of hundreds of slaves along the GEORGIA SEACOAST and a veteran of the War of 1812. Partly because of his relative privilege and isolation from the mainland, he likely raised his children either to practice Islam or at least to identify with their Muslim heritage.

Because slave marriages were constantly broken apart by masters who sold a husband or wife with little or no regard for the feelings of the spouses, it is likely that many Muslim slaves in the United States formally and informally married several times. There is no evidence to indicate that shari‘a guidelines governing marriage were observed, at least not on a wide scale by the thousands of Muslim slaves.

### EARLY SYRIAN-AMERICAN MARRIAGES IN THE MIDWEST

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, some Syrian and Lebanese married couples such as the Juma family of Ross, NORTH DAKOTA, immigrated to the United States together. But in many other instances, women in the Middle East were discouraged from immigrating, and men, Muslims and Christians alike, came alone to seek what they believed would be riches in America and then return with their newfound wealth to the Old Country. According to a 1915 article in *Al-Bayan*, an American ARABIC-language newspaper founded in NEW YORK CITY by members of the DRUZE COMMUNITY, some men left their wives behind in their villages and took second wives in America. Although it is unknown how many men abandoned their first wives for American spouses, the newspaper condemned the practice.

Some single Muslim men married non-Muslim women. In North Dakota, for example, several mixed marriages between Muslim men and Irish-Catholic women took place. The same pattern also obtained for many early SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM male immigrants who married Roman Catholic Latinas in California and Spanish Harlem in New York City. These men cited several reasons for mixed marriages beyond the fact that few Muslim women were available. An example is the case of Abe, a SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICAN whose last name was withheld by author Alixa Naff in her book, *Becoming American* (1985). He married a Polish woman in 1933, explaining that he did not want to pay *mahr*. "This is America," he said. "If we love each other, we should marry, but they [the parents of prospective brides] asked and asked [for money]. Because of that, I did not marry a Syrian girl." According to Kahlil Bazy, a sheikh, or leader, in Highland Park, Michigan, men did not marry Muslim women because they were not allowed to date them, whereas they could date Christian women.

### MARRIAGE AFTER 1965

Muslim-American marriages after 1965 reflected the expanding diversity of the Muslim-American community in this period of tremendous growth. In addition to the multi-generational Arab, South Asian, and African-American Muslim communities, the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 led to the immigration of approximately 1 million new Muslims to the United States from 1968 to the 2000. Many of them were Arab and South Asian, though Iranians, sub-Saharan Africans, southeastern Europeans, Southeast Asians, and other Muslims came in significant numbers as well. The presence of a Muslim community that was diverse by language, national origin, class, ethnicity, and generation translated into sometimes vastly different ideas about marriage.

### Dating

Most Muslim-American religious leaders in the 20th century, regardless of sect or ethnicity, frowned on DATING as a religiously acceptable practice. In the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), for example, if male or female members were caught dating, and even worse, fornicating, they would often be tried by their local mosque and suspended or expelled from the group. The NOI's socially conservative approach to dating was echoed in the era of religious revivalism in the 1970s, as many Sunni and Shi'a immigrant imams, or religious leaders, cited dating and sex out of wedlock as one of the evil aspects of American society.

Despite religious prohibitions, many Muslim Americans in the second half of the 20th century dated anyway. Some completely ignored the taboo of sex before marriage, while others were careful to marry before having sexual intercourse with their spouse. Some religious leaders, concerned about Muslims marrying non-Muslims, encouraged a form of chaperoned, religious dating, often sponsored by a mosque or Muslim organization.

In the early 21st century, mosques such as the All Dulles Area Muslim Society in Sterling, Virginia, created singles programs and premarital counseling. The MUSLIM ALLIANCE IN NORTH AMERICA, an African-American Sunni Muslim group, expressed concern about couples rushing into marriage to have sex or because individuals lacked communities to screen potential spouses. In 2008, an Alliance spokesperson argued that couples should be encouraged to date before marrying. Secular Muslims were more comfortable dating but often were still interested in meeting a Muslim spouse. They, like many other Americans, used INTERNET dating sites in which they might meet potential mates.

### Weddings

Both before and after 1965, Muslim-American WEDDINGS did not follow any one ceremonial protocol. Because there were few religious protocols on Muslim wedding ceremonies, brides, grooms, and their families were free to choose among a variety of ritual options. At times, these followed the ethnic rituals of first-generation immigrants from places such as Bosnia or India. At other times, they were completely American in nature. In the Nation of Islam, for example, brides in the middle 1970s often wore elaborate, frilly wedding gowns with veils; grooms donned a tuxedo; and the couple was inevitably pictured jointly cutting a large wedding cake, generally baked by one of the NOI's many professional bakeries.

After 1965, Muslim brides who traced their ethnic roots to Arab, South Asian, or East African cultural traditions sometimes had their hands and feet decorated with henna a night or two before the wedding. This practice then spread to the rest of the Muslim-American community, becoming increasingly popular by the first decade of the 21st century with indigenous





Wedding of Harvey 2X and Marjorie X, 1972. Harvey 2X and Marjorie X cut their wedding cake—made with whole wheat flour in accordance with Nation of Islam dietary laws—during their wedding reception at Muhammad’s Mosque No. 4 in Washington, D.C. After becoming Sunni Muslims in 1975, the couple became known as Ahmad and Marjorie Karim, names that were given to them by religious leader W. D. Mohammed. (Photograph Courtesy of Jamillah Karim)

Muslims. Generally all-female events, the henna party became a ritual of sisterly solidarity with the bride.

Though Muslim Americans have not traditionally exchanged wedding vows—which is accomplished by the signing of the wedding contract—they have held wedding celebrations of various sorts. Muslim-American wedding receptions, which can be separated by gender depending on the religious orientation, ethnicity, and class of the couple’s friends and family, have included dancing and serving food to guests. Participants have worn a variety of outfits, often blending various forms of indigenous and immigrant styles of dress. Dancing at weddings can include the dabka, or Arab line dance, and the Electric Slide, a now venerable American tradition.

### Polygamy

Though polygamy is against the law in the United States, and most mosques and Muslim-American organizations have discouraged the practice, it has been estimated that by the early 21st century, there were 50,000 to 100,000 Muslim

Americans living in polygamous households (including children). Generally speaking, men engaged in polygamy avoided confrontation with authorities by having one civil marriage and additional religious marriages. Polygamous marriages have led to the abuse or neglect of women in several cases, though some women have reported that they are highly satisfied with their husbands and gain contentment through their relationships with their fellow wives. Muslim-American women’s activists such as Aziza al-Hibri and Daisy Khan encouraged Muslim women to add stipulations against polygamy to their marriage contracts, thus preventing their husbands from taking additional wives.

### Healthy Marriages

Echoing general trends in American publishing, a huge religious literature has poured forth from various Muslim-American media about how to strengthen one’s marriage. Marriage had been depicted as an aspect of life in which religious teachings are extremely relevant. Some Muslim-American women, for example, have used their own readings of the Qur’an and the hadith, or reports of the saying and deeds of the prophet Muhammad and his companions, to battle traditional American and Muslim notions about the privileges of husbands. Though PROGRESSIVE MUSLIMS of both genders have been at the forefront of calling for gender equality inside marriages—in addition to calling for the institution of marriage to be extended to LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER MUSLIMS—many socially conservative Muslim Americans have continued to assert the right of men to be the leaders of households.

Whether socially conservative or liberal, however, Muslim Americans in the first decade of the 21st century were unified in their absolute rejection of domestic violence. In 2005, for example, the MUSLIM ALLIANCE IN NORTH AMERICA (MANA) introduced the Healthy Marriage Initiative, designed to combat the presence of “broken homes, spousal abuse, children raised by one parent, and emotional turmoil in the community.” In 2009, MANA was one of many organizations that reacted strongly to the murder of Bridges-TV cofounder Aasiya Hassan by her husband. Calling for a zero-tolerance policy for domestic violence, ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA Vice President Mohamed Hagmagid Ali outlined a series of steps that all Muslim Americans, and particularly male imams, must take to prevent domestic violence and protect its victims.

### CONCLUSION

During the several centuries of Muslim-American history, the meanings and functions of marriage have varied considerably. Struggling to protect their marriages and their families from the threat of sale and other violence, Muslim-American slaves were denied basic human rights to life and



liberty. Muslim-American male immigrants who came by choice to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries often married non-Muslim women because there were few Muslim women to marry. The proliferation of Muslim-American converts from the 1920s onward and the increased immigration of Muslims after 1965 led to the widely held sense that marrying another Muslim was vital to the perpetuation of Muslim-American identity, however one defined it. Marriage became a symbol for the health of the community as a whole, even as it was practiced and interpreted in a variety of ways.

Samira Mehta with Hanifa Abdul Sabur

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### Matrimonials from *Islamic Horizons* (2007)

*Islamic Horizons*, the attractive glossy magazine of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), includes news about the ISNA, the largest Islamic organization in the United States, articles on various aspects of Muslim-American life, opinion pieces, personality profiles, book reviews, and advertisements of Islamic finance companies, food suppliers, and Muslim children's literature. It also features a matrimonials section in which prospective brides and grooms can advertise for a wife or husband—much like other Americans use personal ads in weekly newspapers to find marriage or romance. A large percentage of these advertisements are

placed by highly educated, upwardly mobile Muslim Americans, often from a South Asian background. One explanation for the predominance of South Asian–American Muslims in this forum is the cost; South Asian–American Muslims are among the wealthiest of all Muslim-American ethnic groups and can thus afford to place such ads. Another factor may be that many South Asian–American Muslims live in isolated suburbs, where the pool of available spouses is smaller than it would be if they lived in ethnic enclaves such as Dearborn, Michigan. A final reason, apparent in the ads themselves, is that many of these persons are looking to marry someone of the same educational, ethnic, religious, and class background.



And of His signs is this; He created for you spouses  
From yourselves that you might find peace in them,  
And He ordained between you love and mercy.  
Lo, herein indeed are signs for people who reflect.  
(Qur'an 30:21)

### Seeking Husband

Hyderabadi Sunni Muslim physician parents seek MD husband for their 24 year old daughter (3rd year medical student in Chicago, IL). Wears hijab.

Sunni Muslim Indian parents invite correspondence for their U.S.-born/raised daughter, 28, medical resident, from a medical doctor or professional, 28–32.

Sunni Muslim moderately religious parents invite correspondence for their Pakistan-raised daughter, 30, pretty, fair, 5'4", M.A., residing in CA, from highly educated Muslim professionals with strong family background.

Sunni Muslim Indian parents invite correspondence from professional or medical doctor for their U.S.-born/raised physician daughter, pretty, religious, in final year of residency program.

Middle Eastern parents of a hijab-wearing daughter, beautiful, 27 years old, U.S.-born and resident MD, looking for religious, 27–33, dynamic, and ambitious MD/professional.

Sunni Muslim parents of a U.S.-educated and citizen daughter, MD, second-year resident, invite correspondence from moderately religious professionals under 30.

Parents invite photo and correspondence for their U.S.-born daughter, 28, very accomplished,

attractive, well-traveled, and outgoing lawyer who wears hijab.

Sunni Muslim Hyderabad parent of hijab-wearing daughter, 22, citizen, and college junior invite correspondence from doctors/masters, practicing Muslims.

Parents of college-going educated daughters, 20 and 22, seek correspondence from never married, educated professionals, 25–28, religiously oriented, Pakistani origin. Family values are a must. Send resume and photo.

Sunni Muslim parents invite correspondence for their U.S. born/raised-daughter, 25, beautiful and tall, student at a prestigious medical school, from a practicing, highly educated professional.

Sunni Muslim Indo/Pak parents of U.S.-raised daughter, 26, law graduate from a prestigious U.S. university, invite correspondence from a professional Muslim, 26–29, of similar background.

Sunni Muslim Indiana-origin parents invite correspondence for their daughter 23, 5'5", wears hijab, third-year MD student at a prestigious medical school, from an individual with an MD degree. Contact with photo and resume.

Muslim Bangladeshi parents (recognized by UN) invite correspondence from compatible match for their U.S.-raised, Ivy League engineer daughter, 29, currently holding position as certified project manager in a Fortune 100 company.

Sunni Muslim parents seeking a religiously-inclined match for their U.S. born, 21 year old, educated, pretty, hijabi, daughter.

### Seeking Wife

Highly educated family of a practicing Sunni Muslim, intelligent, and handsome doctor from top-ranked medical school in a prestigious residency, 28, born in U.S. Seeks life partner: a professional with a similar level of education and religious commitment.

Sunni Muslim, never married, 40 years old, Ph.D., engineer, seeks educated, religiously oriented, U.S. resident, 31–35, India/Bangladesh/Pakistan origin.

Sunni Muslim parents of a U.S.-educated son, M.D., doing residency in a highly competitive specialty, invite correspondence (with photo and short resume) from moderately religious, non-hijabi professionals 26 and under.

Pakistani Sunni Muslim parents of a medical resident, 30, seeking a beautiful, highly educated, and practicing Muslimah.



Source: *Islamic Horizons* (September–October 2007): 74.

### Maryamiyya Sufi Order

The Maryamiyya, or Miriamiyya, Order was founded by the author, poet, painter, and Sufi teacher Frithjof Schuon (1907–98), known among his followers as 'Isa Nur al-Din. An outgrowth of the 'Alawiyya-Shadhiliyya, a North African Sufi lineage into which Schuon was initiated in Algeria, the Maryamiyya, as a distinct order, seems to have emerged from a series of powerful visions of the Virgin Mary that occurred to Schuon beginning in 1965.

Born in Basle, Switzerland, on June 18, 1907, into a German Catholic family, Schuon became interested in spiritual matters at an early age and first encountered Islam while working as a textile designer in Paris. Late in 1932, he traveled to Algeria, where the next year he was initiated into Sufism by the Shadhili Sufi master Ahmad al-'Alawi. For many years, Schuon led a small, secretive group of European Sufi disciples based mainly in Lausanne and Basle, Switzerland, although he counted followers from across Europe.

In 1946, Schuon was declared an independent master by his disciples rather than just a *muqaddam*, or "deputy," of the Algerian Sufi order into which he was originally initiated. In effect, this allowed Schuon to create his own Sufi order. He traveled widely from the 1950s to the early 1970s, a period during which he studied Native American art, religion, and culture among the Sioux and Crow Indians in the western United States. In 1980, Schuon and his wife, Catherine (1924– ), moved from Switzerland to Bloomington, Indiana, where he quietly taught a small circle of American followers in the forested residential community of Inverness Farms.

On Christmas Eve 1985, Schuon experienced a particularly powerful vision of the Virgin Mary in which she appeared to him disrobed, an experience that appears to have led him to begin promoting mystical exercises involving ritual nudity among his disciples. In 1991, a disillusioned member of the order brought a legal case against Schuon, who was subsequently indicted by a grand jury on felony charges of child molestation and sexual battery. A number of Schuon's more prominent followers vocally denounced the charges in the local press as false, and the prosecutor eventually dropped the case, citing insufficient evidence. Schuon died in his home at Inverness Farms in Bloomington on May 5, 1998.

A prolific author, Schuon published works with a marked, although not always explicit, impact on the Western academic study of Sufism and other mystical traditions as well as, to a lesser extent, on Muslim intellectualist circles in the West, largely through the aegis of scholars such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1933– ) and Houston Smith (1919– ). Deeply influenced by the thought of the French metaphysician René Guénon, Schuon's writings championed two interrelated ideas. First was the doctrine of the *sophia perennis*, or the "perennial wisdom," which was understood to animate all authentic systems of religious expression. This is normally called Perennialism. Second, there was the idea that secular modern life must be rejected in favor of traditional sacred doctrines. This is normally called Traditionalism. Among his many works addressing Islam, his *Understanding Islam* (1963) was particularly well received in both the Muslim world and the West.

Erik S. Ohlander

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**masjid** See MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS.

### Mattson, Ingrid (1963– ) *Islamic Society of North America president*

Ingrid Mattson's election in 2001 to the vice presidency of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) and her election in 2006 to the presidency marked the first time a woman or a convert to Islam has led the organization. These events have been widely viewed as symbols of the progressive nature of Islam in North America. Mattson has used her position to press for women's rights at mosques across the continent, in addition to advocating for Muslims' civil rights in the United States.

Born on August 24, 1963, in Kingston, Ontario, she was raised Roman Catholic and converted to Islam during her college years after a period of agnosticism. While an art student living in Paris during summer 1986, she was emotionally moved by kindnesses of poverty-stricken West African Muslims she encountered. Returning to the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, she began listening to cassettes



Ingrid Mattson, the first female president of the Islamic Society of North America, is a professor of religious studies at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut. (Stephen J. Carrera/AP Images)

with recitations of the QUR'AN. She converted to Islam before receiving her degree in philosophy and fine arts in 1987.

Before attending graduate school, Mattson moved to Peshawar, Pakistan, to work in a refugee camp, helping provide aid to Afghan refugees from late 1987 to early 1989. There she met and married a fellow aid worker, Amer Aatek, an Egyptian. Mattson has written about how several female refugees generously supplied her with an elaborate wedding outfit when they heard she was going to wear regular clothes to her wedding. The couple has two children: a daughter, Soumayya, and a son, Ubayda.

Enrolling at the University of Chicago in fall 1989, Mattson earned a Ph.D. in Islamic studies in 1999 and has since been a professor at the Macdonald Center for Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations at Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut. She became director of the center in 2008. She also directs the Islamic Chaplaincy program there, the first of its kind in the United States. As a professor, her courses have covered SHARI'A (a Muslim code of law and ethics), rituals, theology, history, female spirituality, and the life of the prophet MUHAMMAD. In 2007, she published a book entitled *The Story of the Qur'an: Its History and Place in Muslim Life*.

Her 2001 election to the vice presidency of ISNA provided a broader platform for her work as a Muslim-American public intellectual. A theme of her leadership has been her belief that it is more important to build the North American Muslim community into a model for Muslims worldwide than to criticize U.S. government policies, both foreign and domestic, that, many Muslims contend, are discriminatory against followers of their religion. In writings and lectures,

she has challenged the male leadership of American mosques to provide women with improved PRAYER space so they can better hear sermons and announcements. She has advocated for women to be fully engaged in the management of their mosques and for their participation in decisions and discussions on religious rulings. To the chagrin of some liberal Muslim groups in the United States, however, she has not called for Muslim women to lead nonrelated Muslim men in prayer.

In 2007, she engaged in high-level interreligious dialogue with Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ). Yoffie delivered an address at an ISNA conference in CHICAGO, and Mattson did the same at a URJ conference in San Diego.

On January 18, 2009, Mattson was among several clergy who spoke at the inaugural prayer service for president-elect Barack Obama at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. She prayed that “[o]n this day of new beginnings, with hearts lifted high in hope, may we be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations.”

Jeff Diamant

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#### Mayfield, Brandon (1966– ) attorney

In 2004, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) arrested Muslim-American Brandon Mayfield as a material witness in connection with the deadly 2004 train bombings in Madrid, Spain. Mayfield spent more than two weeks in detention but was eventually freed when it was discovered that the FBI had mistaken him for another person. For critics of the USA PATRIOT ACT, Mayfield's ordeal emerged as a sad symbol of U.S. law enforcement failures in the era after SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.

Brandon Bieri Mayfield was born in Coos Bay, Oregon, on July 15, 1966, and was raised in Halstead, Kansas. Mayfield served in the U.S. Army Reserve from 1985 to 1989. He met his wife, Mona, an Egyptian national, on a blind date in 1987. He converted to Islam shortly after their marriage. Mayfield served as a U.S. Army officer in Bitburg, Germany, from 1992 to 1994 and received a law degree from Washburn University

in Topeka, Kansas, in 1999. He passed the Oregon Bar in 2000 and began work on family law, civil law, and immigration law cases. Mayfield also worked with programs that offer reduced rates for low-income clients.

On March 11, 2004, a carefully planned series of explosions in the commuter train system in Madrid, Spain, killed 191 people and injured 2,000. Spanish National Police found a blue plastic bag in a van parked near the Acala de Henares train station that contained similar detonation devices used in the train bombings. Several latent fingerprints were found on this bag, and on March 17, a digital image of latent fingerprint No. 17 was sent to the FBI crime lab in Quantico, Virginia.

The FBI's Latent Print Unit conducted an examination of the latent fingerprint by running the image through the Automated Fingerprint Identification System, which produced 20 possible matches. FBI senior fingerprint examiner Terry Green manually compared the potential matches and, according to FBI claims, “found a ‘100 percent’ match with the fourth ranked print on the list.” The fourth-ranked matching print was identified as Brandon Mayfield. Mayfield's prints were on file from a burglary arrest in 1984. This match was confirmed by at least two other FBI fingerprint examiners.

Based on this evidence, Mayfield was arrested on May 6, 2004, and held in custody for 19 days without bond. Those 19 days were spent in solitary “lock-down” where he was not allowed contact with his family. A month earlier, however, Spanish authorities had examined the fingerprint and determined that it was “conclusively negative” to Brandon Mayfield, meaning the print was not Mayfield's. The Forensic Science Division of the Spanish National Police had verified that latent fingerprint No. 17 belonged to Algerian national Ouhmane Daoud. Spanish authorities stated that the fingerprints matched Daoud's right thumb and middle finger. Based on this information, Mayfield was released from prison on May 24, 2004.

In explaining its actions, a December 2005 FBI report from U.S. attorney Karen Immergut defended the arrest of Mayfield, stating that the evidence “demonstrates that the government and its agents were acting in good faith” when they imprisoned Mayfield. According to Immergut, Mayfield was believed to pray at a mosque in Oregon where some Muslims had pled guilty of conspiring to help the Taliban. Mayfield also wrote a letter in support of the Taliban, according to the FBI, and helped to organize a branch of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION. Mayfield advertised his law practice with someone “directly linked in business dealings” with terrorist Osama bin Laden's former personal secretary. He had also represented Jeffrey Battle in a child custody case. Battle was later sentenced to 18 years in prison for conspiring to wage war against the United States. Mayfield's home computer, which was seized during a raid of his home, contained



information on travel to Madrid, rental housing in Spain, and a Web site connected to the Spanish National passenger rail system.

Mayfield argued that he had not traveled to Spain and that the "Spanish documents" found by the FBI during a raid of his home were, in fact, Spanish homework belonging to his son. He called his imprisonment "an abuse of the judicial process" and described it as a "harrowing ordeal" in which he was "subject to lock-down, strip searches, sleep deprivation, unsanitary living conditions, shackles and chains, threats, physical pain and humiliation." Mayfield firmly believed that his warrantless surveillance and arrest, part of the USA PATRIOT Act, were a violation of his Fourth Amendment rights.

In November 2006, the U.S. government agreed to pay Mayfield \$2 million and issued a formal apology for his arrest in connection with the Madrid bombings.

*Britney J. McMahan*

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**media** See AZIZAH; FILM; INTERNET; MUHAMMAD SPEAKS; MUSLIM SUNRISE; POETRY; RADIO.

### Melungeons

On the periphery of Muslim-American history are the Melungeons, a group with possibly Moorish ancestry and Muslim roots. Melungeons represent a mysterious chapter of Islamic history tucked away in the Appalachian Mountains of the eastern United States. Although these communities incorporated escaped Muslim slaves and possibly Muslim immigrants from the 16th to the 19th centuries, present-day Melungeons show little sign of Islamic roots. DNA evi-

dence has also suggested that the vast majority of present-day Melungeons trace their genetic roots to European ancestry.

The term *melungeon* refers to a triracial person usually of European, African, and Native American descent. Melungeons are also loosely connected communities living predominantly in the Appalachian Mountains of Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky. These communities have traditionally been isolated and introverted. Melungeons married within their own community and had little contact with outsiders. Myths of their origins have abounded in the history of the South.

At times these myths turned to racial stereotypes and discrimination, as in the 1845 court case of eight Melungeons who were initially denied the right to vote in Hancock County, Tennessee, because some of them may have had African ancestry. The eugenics testing of the early 1900s that singled out multiracial peoples marks the most devastating form of racial discrimination. Largely targeting Melungeon communities, eugenics scientists sterilized thousands of multiracial people in the American South under false pretenses. Melungeons sought to protect themselves from discrimination by appealing to various myths of their origins, including that they are of Portuguese, Phoenician, or Jewish and Muslim descent.

The theory invoked most frequently to argue against their possible African-American ancestry was that the Melungeons were not in fact multiracial but, rather, of Portuguese origin. Although this claim appears to have no factual evidence, it has been suggested in numerous court cases. For instance, in the 1890s in Rhea County, Tennessee, Melungeons sued for the right to attend white schools based on their Portuguese roots. The 1845 right-to-vote suit was also won by arguing that the eight Melungeons were Portuguese. In 1872, lawyer Lewis Shepherd chose to capitalize on another Melungeon myth by arguing successfully for a Melungeon woman's right to the inheritance of her white father by suggesting that she was not multiracial but rather of Carthaginian or Phoenician origin. Melungeon historian Brent Kennedy suggests in *Melungeons* (1997) that Shepherd himself was most likely of Melungeon descent. Other possible Melungeons include President Abraham Lincoln, his Confederate counterpart, Jefferson Davis, and explorer Daniel Boone.

In 1885, North Carolina assemblyman Hamilton McMillan claimed that Melungeons were descendants of Sir Walter Raleigh's lost colony of Roanoke, Virginia. Melungeon historian Elizabeth Hirschman argues in *Melungeons* (2005) that the colonists of Roanoke Island, in present-day North Carolina, were predominantly Sephardic Jews and Muslim Moors. Both groups settled at Roanoke in 1587 rather than return to Europe and face the Spanish Inquisition. If this theory is true, the colony of Roanoke was the first Melungeon

community, implying that the first American colony was both a Muslim and a Jewish settlement.

Hirschman also suggests that Roanoke began a long trend of predominantly crypto-Muslim and Jewish immigration to Melungeon communities lasting into the 1700s (“crypto” typically meaning to profess to be Christian while hiding a Muslim or Jewish identity). In the 17th and 18th centuries, South Carolina was an entry point for Moors and Sephardic Jews who could have assimilated into Melungeon communities. Many of these Muslim and Jewish immigrants, like their Roanoke predecessors, may have immigrated from Portugal and Spain. Both countries had a long and tenuous relationship with the Moors and Sephardic Jews who have settled and at times dominated Portugal and Spain, at times causing mass migrations of Moors and Sephardic Jews from the Iberian Peninsula.

In this case, Melungeons may be Portuguese and Muslim or Jewish, and this would support both origin theories. Although there is little evidence for the theory that these immigrants to South Carolina migrated to Melungeon communities, Melungeon scholars such as N. Brent Kennedy, Tim Hashaw, and Wayne Winkler demonstrate that Melungeon communities did integrate with Iberian, African, Native American (specifically Cherokee, Yuchis, Creeks, Powhatans, and others), and other peoples who were not of Anglo-European origin. DNA tests in the late 1990s suggested that approximately 17 percent of present-day Melungeons’ genetic pool could be traced to American Indians, African Americans, and Middle Easterners, while 83 percent of their DNA was of European origin.

Hirschman has claimed that Melungeon communities remained predominantly Jewish but also Muslim into the 1900s while appearing outwardly Christian. The largest religious organization of Melungeon communities has been Primitive Baptist, a church known for a disdain of outside leadership and choosing ministers from their own congregations. Freemasons, a once secretive fraternal organization that became an open community-service organization in the 20th century, are another group popular among Melungeon communities. Melungeons could have conceivably maintained Muslim and Jewish beliefs and practices under the guise of Christianity through the lenient and closed Primitive Baptist church and the elite Freemasons, though this hidden religious life, if it once existed, appears to have gradually dissipated into a Christian identity as religious and ethnic roots were suppressed.

Today Melungeon enclaves have for the most part integrated into mainstream society. Few Melungeons are aware of their mysterious roots, their past being lost to history. A few notable scholars who themselves are Melungeons, however, such as N. Brent Kennedy, Elizabeth Hirschman, and Wayne Winkler, along with other scholars, are recov-

ering the Melungeons’ place in American history. Muslim-American authors such as Jerald F. Dirks have celebrated the Melungeons as one of the many signs of the “forgotten legacy” of Muslim Americans. Dirks points to the Melungeons, among other groups, as evidence for the continual presence of Muslims in North America. Ironically while Islam secured its place among 20th-century religions in the United States, the partially Islamic roots of Melungeon communities became part of history.

David Walsh

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### men

Studying Muslim-American history through the category of gender requires attention to men as well as women. As an analytic category, “gender” rejects assumptions about natural and unchanging social roles and instead focuses on the ways in which such roles have developed over time and across space. From romanticized figures of Orientalist “sultans” and peasant immigrants in the late 19th century to grotesque “terrorists” and al-Qaeda operatives in the 21st, these dominant caricatures dissolve religious identities within ETHNICITY, while failing to capture the realities of life experienced by Muslim-American men in different historical moments and geographic locations.

These caricatures also fail to recognize the earliest Muslims in America—African slaves—as well as the legacy of 20th-century black political groups drawing on Islamic vocabularies, symbols, myths, and images. Many Muslim-American men—like their non-Muslim counterparts—have

embraced ideas of patriarchy by organizing their families and communities around male interests. But this social and historical fact should not exclude them from historical, ethnographic, or sociological investigation. Understanding patriarchy among Muslims in America requires attention to the wide spectrum of experiences and ideas of both men and women, while understanding gender among Muslims in America requires going beyond “patriarchy” as the single interpretive lens.

#### MUSLIM MALE SLAVES

Most records of Muslim life in the United States before the 20th century are from the perspectives of men. Testimonies of enslaved Africans whom scholars have identified as probable Muslims, for instance, are almost all from the lips of men. JOB BEN SOLOMON (ca. 1701–ca. 1773), ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (1762–1829), LAMEN KEBE (1767–?), and OMAR IBN SAID (ca. 1770–1864) are such figures whose testimonies establish Muslim practice in the United States well before the 20th century—daily PRAYERS, dietary restrictions, even recitation and transcription of the Fatiha, the opening chapter of the QUR’AN. Nevertheless, that Job Ben Solomon and Abdul Rahman Ibrahima were both African royalty who eventually returned to their homelands—in Ibrahima’s case by presidential directive—suggest that such records not only did not speak for all enslaved Muslims but that neither did they speak for all enslaved Muslim men. More common than these princes of Africa were the thousands of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES who practiced Islam and who, against many odds, passed on some elements of their Islamic traditions to subsequent generations.

Though enslaved Muslims of African descent were raised with the idea that they should provide economically for their families as the head of household, their ability to accomplish this task was severely handicapped by their enslavement. Not only were they forced to work for their owner rather than for themselves or their families, they were also unable to prevent their families from dismemberment through sale. Slave owners could sell any family member at will, thus tearing children from parents, husbands from wives, and siblings from one another.

Men also had limited power to protect daughters and wives against sexual predation. Attempting to prevent white overseers and owners from committing such acts could have severe consequences for men: They could be sold or tortured to death. The memory of such male “impotence” (the sexual imagery is significant) in the face of slave-owner power would later haunt African-American Muslims such as ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) and MALCOLM X (1925–65), both of whom saw the inability of black men to protect black women as an immoral act of cowardice brought about partly by the male slaves’ denial of their true Islamic—and

manly—heritage. Although by the time of emancipation in 1865, most freed slaves who claimed a religious faith were Christian, not Muslim, the tendency of later generations to locate black manhood in a lost or abandoned non-Christian faith was important not only for the creation of African-American political identities but also for the creation of new forms of African-American manhood.

#### IMMIGRANT MUSLIM MEN

Despite a history of Muslim presence in America since its colonial days, not until the 20th century did immigrants from nations with significant Muslim populations begin to arrive voluntarily in the United States in statistically significant numbers. Echoing broader patterns in U.S. immigration history, immigrants in the earliest waves of this voluntary migration were predominantly male. Since the United States did not explicitly identify the religiosity of incoming migrants, it is impossible to state with complete certainty how many Muslims participated in the massive immigrations of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Moreover, the majority of immigrants from nations with Muslim populations were Christian, not Muslim.

The pattern of immigration from regions with large numbers of Muslims followed, in three key aspects, that of other groups immigrating in large numbers at the same time. First, despite variations in nationality, sect, occupation, marital status, and age, throughout this century of Muslim immigration the vast majority of immigrants were men, with ratios reaching to more than 1,000 males to every 100 female immigrants. Second, in terms of occupation, until the 1960s most immigrant Muslims worked as common laborers, peddlers, and small-business owners. Third, many came to the United States expecting to return permanently to their homelands after making enough money to support their families, although in reality few were able to do so. As these men began to send for their wives or to visit home to wed, Islam became more firmly entrenched in the American landscape.

Not only did this trend contribute to the development of Muslim neighborhoods, the establishment of permanent MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS, and the diversification of Islam in America, it also transformed the faith from predominantly male social environments to increasingly family-oriented communities. Living as fathers and husbands necessitated different sets of social practices from those of single men. As greater numbers of students and professionals began to immigrate after WORLD WAR II, the economic and professional base of Muslim Americans began to expand, thus generating even more ways of negotiating religion with gender.

One way of measuring changes in the way gender was understood is by examining the increase in rates of intermar-

riage between Muslim men and non-Muslim women in the second half of the 20th century. In *Family and Gender among American Muslims* (1996), Barbara Bilgé discusses intermarriages between men born in Turkey and women born in the United States and Canada. She divides these “heterogamous” marriages into three categories: working-class, middle-class/ex-military, and affluent families. Her data expose how such variables as ethnicity, education, occupation, and religion affected understandings of gender roles within the family.

In the middle-class families Bilgé studied, it was commonly understood that the husband would be the provider, even if the wife had a comparable education or career before marriage. Patriarchal Turkish gender roles also often prevailed, particularly the expectation of respect for fathers and husbands, demonstrated by wives and children through obedient conduct both in private and in public. Among the working-class and affluent couples, Turkish culture was less present in their daily lives, although the gender roles of husband and wife were still clearly defined. For instance, working-class and affluent husbands were often more permissive about their wives’ and daughters’ DRESS and EDUCATION, even if the ideal of a solitary male provider prevailed.

Although many Muslim men have modified traditional gender roles—particularly ideas about male dominance—through interactions with American culture, this is not to say that Muslim manhood has “secularized”—become less “authentically” Muslim—in the United States. Interactions between men and women in Muslim communities have always been saturated with possibility—capable of taking on untold varieties of forms—regardless of the dominant narratives and ideals. Moreover, the popular prototypes of the submissive, veiled female and the authoritative, uncompromising male are in many ways products of the conservative turn in Islam during the last half of the 20th century.

As with REVIVALISM movements in other religious traditions, the ideological development of groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood testify as much to a rearticulation of Islamic manhood as they do to religious revival. Thus, even as some segments of the Muslim-American male population have increased their participation in American culture by establishing, directing, and participating in social, political, academic, and multireligious/interfaith organizations, others have distinguished themselves from the dominant public sphere by accentuating the distinctive attributes of their faiths. This splintered interaction with American culture helps explain the diversity of Islam in America, as well as the particular roles that individual Muslim men play in its multiple communities.

#### AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM MANHOOD

During the 20th century, African Americans constituted the single-largest ethnic group of Muslim Americans. Distinct

from the Islam practiced by slaves, however, until late in the century the category of “black Muslims” referred to several movements of 20th-century design that linked the symbols, myths, and practices of conventional Islam (especially Sunni and Shi’a) with quests for racial equality, liberation, or territorial emancipation. During the earliest decades of the 20th century, moreover, both NOBLE DREW ALI’S MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America and Elijah Muhammad’s NATION OF ISLAM were instrumental in the negotiation of African-American manhood. Later in the century, other movements, such as the FIVE PERCENTERS, offered explicit, gender-based cosmologies drawn from idiosyncratic interpretations of Islamic teachings. Certainly each of these groups provided forums for women to exercise and manipulate power within their respective communities. Nevertheless, participants in each of these movements authored and celebrated distinct forms of black manhood that conditioned group cohesion and worked toward meeting the broader social demands of a highly racialized society.

The Moorish Science Temple and the Nation of Islam developed in a period of heightened racial consciousness in the urban North. During the 1910s, when Noble Drew Ali (born Timothy Drew) first established in NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, what would later become the Moorish Science Temple, thousands of African Americans from the South migrated to urban centers in the North, such as NEW YORK CITY, DETROIT, and CHICAGO. Men as well as women made this journey and, upon arrival, transformed the religious culture of their destinations. While some “New Negroes” during the 1920s repudiated all religion as a pernicious invention of their former enslavers, others sought to salvage their faith by locating it in either rehistoricized or non-Christian form; that is, many African Americans joined “restorationist” Pentecostal churches (the most popular of which was the Church of God in Christ) that privileged the ancient church and scorned the church that sanctioned slavery, while others discarded Christianity altogether. Among the latter, many African Americans created and embraced forms of Judaism and Islam.

Surveillance documents gathered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) during the 1940s indicate that many male members of the Moorish Science Temple then living in the North were in fact born in the South and thus participated in the Great Migration of the 1910s through the 1930s. As the sons and grandsons of slaves, these “Moorish Americans” were invested not in merely faulting their historical and contemporary oppressors but in constructing a response that proved their identities as men. One way of doing this was to reject the vernacular of race—they were neither black, negro, colored, nor Ethiopian, for each of these concepts, according to Moorish Science teaching, denied that they were “made in the Image and after the likeness of God, Allah.” Another way



of defining their humanity was to put into practice a system of gender that clearly defined the expectations for men and women, both individually and in relation to one another. The Divine Constitution and By-Laws of the movement clearly stated, for instance, that “husband, you must support your wife and children; wife, you must obey your husband and take care of your children and look after the duties of your household.” Though this instruction reflected conventional (frequently rendered “patriarchal”) gender roles, it also admonished an impoverished social group to industry, which had been a signature criterion for “manhood” among several different populations, throughout American history.

The Moorish Science Temple’s key text, *The Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America* (1927), which was not derived from the historical Qur’an, also presented “holy instruction and warnings for all young men” as well as teachings on “the duty of a husband.” Written by Noble Drew Ali, who was understood to be “ALLAH’S Prophet,” the *Holy Koran* was the scriptural pillar of the movement and would have been read with the reverence and promise accorded other sacred texts, such as the Bible among Christians or the Torah among Jews. In any case, the specific appeal to gendered conduct was imbued with the status of scripture. The instructions to young men warned of “all the allurements of wantonness” and of the “harlot” who would “tempt thee to the excess in her delights.” Not only would pursuit of these ephemeral pleasures desiccate the “foundation of health which must supply the stream of pleasure,” but it would also perpetuate the reign of the “lower-self” and thereby preclude the union with Allah that came only by mastering the flesh. Like industry, or useful occupation that signified social and economic independence, self-mastery had been understood as a defining element of American manhood since the antebellum period.

Because stepping out from under the long shadow of slavery required moving into a new social identity of one’s own construction, the Moorish Science Temple placed a premium on “becom[ing] a faithful member of society” through a properly regulated marriage. Thus the instructions to young men folded into the prescribed duties of a husband. The onus of a successful marriage was placed on the husband’s selection of a suitable companion, one who did not “destroy” her time “in dress and adornment,” who was not “enamoured with her own beauty,” whose “foot abideth” firmly “in her father’s house,” and who possessed “a form agreeable to thy fancy.” At a time when many domestic relations among urban African Americans lacked the permanency of legal marriages, this injunction to careful selection of one’s spouse amounted to a revision of expected male behavior along more socially stable lines. Similarly, instead of celebrating the urban bachelor culture burgeoning in the 1920s, Moorish Science instructed its male members to “Be faithful to her [one’s wife’s] bed, for she is the mother of thy children.”

Historical consensus identifies Moorish Science as the ideological progenitor of the far more popular Nation of Islam (NOI). Although the NOI, under the leadership of Elijah Muhammad, eventually transformed much of Moorish Science’s doctrine and practice, nevertheless the NOI continued the Temple’s legacy of constructing black manhood. Masculine language permeated the written record of the NOI in documents such as *Message to the Blackman in America* (1965) and the movement’s periodical, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, and the all-male FRUIT OF ISLAM (FOI) division provided rituals of masculinity that members lived every day of their lives. Members of the FOI were models of proper male conduct for others in the community, from matters of dress to regulated drills. Though changing over time, uniforms consisted of either dark suit and bow tie or militaristic garb complete with fez and three-button coat. One scholar has argued that the FOI emerged as a “private security force” during the ministry of the Nation’s founder, W. D. FARD (ca. 1877–ca. 1934?), while the FBI identified the group as the “military section” of the Nation. Whether a defensive security force or an offensive military, the FOI certainly engaged in militaristic activity, such as disciplined drills aiming toward synchronicity and training exercises that, according to the movement’s periodical, conditioned “absolute fitness and precision.” In addition to sartorial and physical discipline, members of the FOI were also expected to discipline their time by selling copies of *Muhammad Speaks*.

Whereas the Moorish Science Temple produced the NOI, the NOI generated another movement, the Five Percenters, or the Nation of Gods and Earths. The Five Percenters were founded in Harlem in 1963 by a former Nation member, Clarence “Pudding” 13X. Whereas the NOI had taught that “the black man” was the “original man,” and thus that God must himself be black, Clarence 13X taught that black men themselves were God. According to Five Percenter theology, “Allah” was proven the rightful name for black men by linking the letters in the anglicized term to anatomical parts: *arm, leg, leg, arm, head*. This theologizing of the black male body was codified in the movement’s anthropology, which divided humanity into classifications based on percentages. According to this theory, 85 percent of humanity is incapable of salvation because they do not know God; 10 percent know God but deny his physical incarnation, teaching instead that he is a “spook”; and the remaining 5 percent know God as the black man. While men are Gods, women are Earths who become Muslim by acknowledging the divinity of their male counterparts and bearing the children of Gods.

## CONCLUSION

Experiences of men and Islam in the United States vary according to a wide range of racial, ethnic, occupational, sectarian, and familial paradigms. While not all members of each

community would recognize others as similarly “Muslim,” each community nevertheless has participated in creations of masculinity that draw from and in turn shape religious knowledge and practice. It is thus important not to reduce understandings of “men and Islam” to specific stereotypes or caricatures but instead to keep in mind this spectrum of experience and circumstance.

Rachel McBride Lindsey

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### Mevlevi Sufi Order

Mevlevi refers to a form of Sufism in which participants use dance as part of their primary religious ritual, called the *sema*. Also known as “whirling dervishes,” a term that was regularly used in 19th-century English to denote spiritual ecstasy and even madness, Mevlevi are perhaps the most famous Sufi order in the United States. In addition to being part of the American cultural imagination for two centuries, Mevlevi began to tour as performers in the 1950s. Sponsored by the Turkish government, the “troupe” played to sold-out audiences across the United States. Since then,

an indigenous group of Americans have become devotees of the Sufi order.

Founded in honor of the poet Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi (?–1273) in 13th-century Anatolia, part of present-day Turkey, the Mevlevi Order strives to achieve total abandonment of worldly passions through a form of ritual dance. Rumi wrote that “dancing is when you rise above both worlds tearing your heart to pieces and giving up your soul.” The dance, music, and poetry utilized in Mevlevi rituals attempt to stimulate an emotional approach to reality and are intended to develop an emotional link with God. The doctrine advocated by Rumi and adopted by Mevlevi is one of religious tolerance and acceptance, combined with a belief in goodness, charity, and awareness through love.

As with many American Sufi movements, the Mevlevi Order became attractive to Americans interested in an esoteric form of Islam that heightens the experience of the divine to achieve transcendence. The Mevlevi Order of America was founded in 1978 by Jeladdudin Loras, son of Suleyman Dede, who was the late sheikh, or leader, of the order in Turkey. Appointed by his father to bring the practices and teachings of the Mevlevi to the West, Jeladdudin first began teaching the Mevlevi way to students in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Mevlevi Order of America has since expanded to have a following in many cities on the West Coast, Hawaii, and also upstate New York. The order has also maintained a Web site and offered regular classes, seminars, and public viewings of the traditional whirling prayer ceremony on December 17 each year to mark the death of Rumi.

The Mevlana Foundation was founded in 1976 by Reshad Feild, who was born in London and was the first sheikh of the Mevlevi Order to venture to the United States. Feild also studied under VILAYAT KHAN and was initiated as a Sufi sheikh by him in the early 1960s. Feild has taught disciples in the American Southwest, although he lived mostly in Switzerland.

Another Mevlevi organization in the United States is the Threshold Society, led by Edmund Kabir Helminski, a Mevlevi sheikh appointed by Celattin Celebi, which has offered seminars and programs in North America and around the world. Celebi, who was regarded by his followers as a descendant of Rumi, was the late international head of the Mevlevi Order. The Threshold Society has maintained a center in Brattleboro, Vermont, where the group has met since the 1990s.

As with other Sufi groups, the Mevlevi Order has included the participation of women and has also appealed to Americans otherwise repelled by membership in other organized religious groups, whether Christian, Jewish, or Muslim. The Mevlevi have generally welcomed religious seekers who do not otherwise identify as Muslims. While their practices may seem exotic at first, some scholars have

argued, the Mevlevi are a quintessentially American religious movement, part of a broader alternative American religious history that traces its lineage from 19th-century theosophy to 21st-century New Age groups.

Natalia Slain

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**military** See UNITED STATES MILITARY.

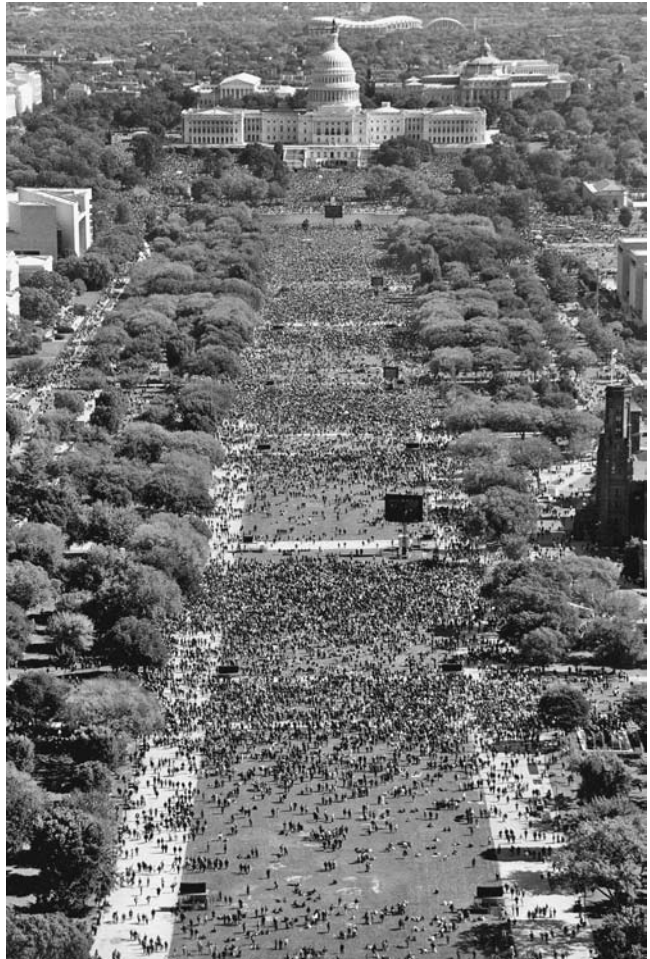
### Million Man March

On October 16, 1995, between 700,000 and 1 million African-American men gathered in Washington, D.C., to attend one of the largest marches of African Americans in the history of the United States. Called the Million Man March, this day-long assembly was organized by LOUIS FARRAKHAN, leader of the NATION OF ISLAM. Men from around the country responded to Farrakhan's call to atone for their past mistakes and to unite for positive social change.

Arriving by bus, train, airplane, and car, some men came the night before the march and slept outside on the historic mall of the nation's capital. They awoke in the morning to the sounds of the *adhan*, the Islamic call to PRAYER. "As the sun grew warmer against a bracing morning chill," journalist Charlayne Hunter-Gault reported, "so did the mood. . . . The growing crowd of black men of all ages and walks of life, friends and strangers, acknowledged each other and seemed to celebrate this call for black men to stand up."

Coordinated by Benjamin Chavis Muhammad, former executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the march was attended by black men of all faiths and no particular faith at all. Historically African-American Christian churches organized caravans and bus trips that accounted for thousands of those in attendance. The Reverend Jesse Jackson, an African-American civil rights leader and head of the National Rainbow Coalition, addressed the crowd.

Long a controversial figure especially among white Americans, Farrakhan became the center of various calls to boycott the march. Prominent politicians and community leaders, both black and white, urged people not to attend. Some called Farrakhan an anti-Semite, racist bigot, and



In 1995, the Million Man March, led by Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, drew hundreds of thousands, if not more than a million, black men to the historic Mall in Washington, D.C. (Tim Sloan/AFP/Getty Images)

sexist. W. D. MOHAMMED, the popular African-American Muslim leader whose leadership Farrakhan had rejected in the late 1970s, criticized Farrakhan's motives in his newspaper, the *Muslim Journal*, arguing that Farrakhan was leading African Americans "further and further into darkness."

But only 5 percent of marchers said that Farrakhan was their main reason for coming, according to a *Washington Post* survey. Harvard law professor Charles Ogletree, who attended the march with his college-age son, said that he was "particularly disturbed that so many of our black leaders, so-called leaders told people to stay away." Clarence Page, a prominent African-American reporter and columnist, argued that Farrakhan deserved credit for the march, no matter what his faults. "Since black men, particularly young black men are the most feared and loathed creatures on the urban streets today," Page explained, "we need self-esteem more than most."



Though the march was geared toward men, some women came in support. Dorothy Height, president of the National Council on Negro Women, addressed the crowd. Maya Angelou composed a poem for the occasion, noting that in spite of the great suffering of African Americans, “we are a going-on people who will rise again.”

But Minister Farrakhan, who spoke for more than two hours, had the last word. Beginning and ending his speech with Islamic prayers, Farrakhan argued that the redemption of African Americans and America’s atonement for the sin of slavery were necessary preconditions for healing the racial divide in the United States. Citing both Muslim and Christian scriptures, he called for black men to take responsibility for any violent and immoral acts in their past. The minister also asked participants to join a black political organization such as the NAACP or the Urban League, and he suggested that all black men attend a church, mosque, synagogue, or any other house of worship that would help them lead a more moral life.

The march was an important turning point in several respects. It inspired and provoked several other marches on Washington, including the 1999 Million Mom March against gun violence. The march built a coalition of African-American leaders that would eventually form the Millions More Movement, which has remained committed to many of the principles that Minister Farrakhan articulated in his 1995 address. Finally, the event also showcased a Farrakhan with whom many Muslim Americans were unfamiliar. Though

many Muslim Americans continued to distance themselves from the controversial leader, others lauded his incorporation of Sunni Islamic teachings into his rhetoric, call for equality among people of all racial backgrounds, and praise for the virtues of personal responsibility and social justice.

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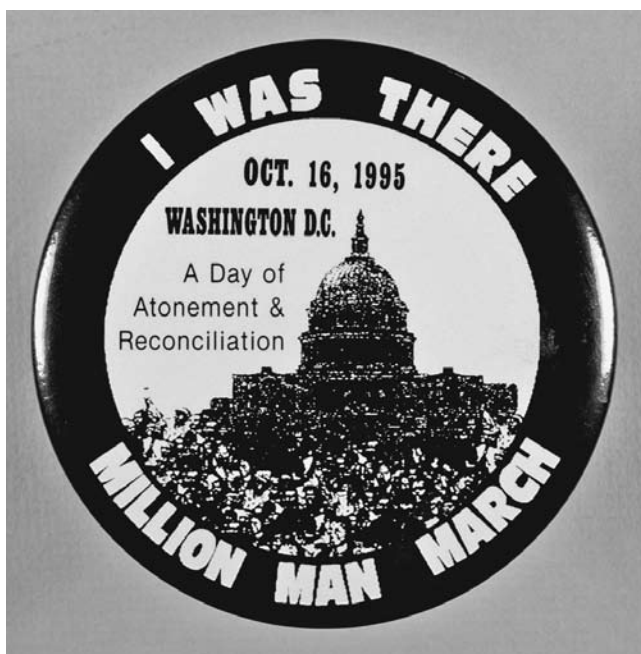
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### missionaries

Some Muslims Americans believe that *da’wa*, or inviting people to Islam, is a duty spelled out in the QUR’AN 16:125: “Call thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and good admonition and dispute with them in the better way.” Still, only a small minority of Muslim Americans have perceived active proselytization as an individual religious duty. Particular individuals, movements, and organizations have led the way in Muslim missionary endeavors. Muslim missionaries in the United States have adhered to a variety of traditions within Islam and have engaged in a variety of approaches. In addition to trying to convert non-Muslims to Islam, their mission work has targeted nonpracticing Muslims and those they feel practice a sectarian or unorthodox Islam. Debating what missionary methods to adopt, many missionaries have said that living faithfully as a Muslim is the single-best technique. Others have claimed missionary work must be pursued aggressively through direct encounter. In addition, missionaries have engaged in social service, community development, education, publishing, and political attempts to transform the United States into an Islamic society.

### EARLY MUSLIM MISSIONARIES

ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB (1846–1916) was the first well-known Muslim-American missionary. A white American who converted to Islam in 1887, Webb drew attention on his return to the United States in 1893 after his travels in Asia. He optimistically believed that if he could educate Americans about the benefits of Islam, they would convert in large numbers. He initiated the American Muslim Propagation Movement and founded the American Islamic Mission in NEW YORK CITY in 1893. He published numerous newspaper articles and lectured throughout the country



The Million Man March has been commemorated in film, literature, and material culture, including buttons. (Corbis)



promoting Islam. He may be best remembered as the only Muslim to speak at the World's Parliament of Religions held in CHICAGO in 1893. Webb also opened a number of Islamic study circles in major American cities. Despite his optimism, he faced financial hardship and a lack of converts. Although he remained a significant figure in Muslim missions, he proved largely unsuccessful.

With their arrival in America in 1920, the Ahmadi missionaries became the first community to engage in Muslim missions on a large scale. Originating in the late 19th century in South Asia, many Sunni Muslims came to consider the Ahmadi movement sectarian and unorthodox. The Ahmadis have played a major role in propagating Islam in America, however, especially among African Americans. Sent abroad specifically as missionaries, they adopted a highly organized methodology. (See AHMADI MUSLIM AMERICANS.)

For example, Muhammad Sadiq, the first Ahmadi missionary to the United States, engaged in widespread circulation of the first English editions of the Qur'an and hadith, the reports of sayings and deeds of the prophet MUHAMMAD and his companions. Settling in Chicago in 1920, he quickly established a mosque and also began publishing an English-language Muslim journal, *MUSLIM SUNRISE*, appealing to a non-Muslim Western audience. Through testimonies of converts, defense of Islam against Western prejudices, and exposition of Qur'anic texts, the journal invited the reader to consider Islam.

Sadiq used the journal and numerous speeches to target explicitly African Americans in the northern urban centers of the country. Sadiq claimed that in contrast to the racism of American Christianity, Islam offered equality. By 1925, he had made 1,025 converts, primarily African Americans. He set up an organizational structure to maximize opportunities for mission. He appointed new converts as sheikhs, or leaders, to enlist others, establish mosques, and collect funds for the movement. This localization eventually led to diverse understandings of Islam within the Ahmadi movement, but it also allowed for continued growth. While the Ahmadi movement came to be overshadowed by other Muslim groups in America by the 1950s, it was a key missionary voice, especially in developing a large African-American Muslim population.

#### AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM MISSIONS

Among the indigenous Muslim-American population, the greatest growth has been among African Americans, who have played a major role in the story of Muslim missionaries. While Ahmadi missionaries had some initial success, other movements have presented other options. For example, DUSÉ MOHAMED ALI offered a different missionary approach. Involved in the Pan-Africanist movement of the early 20th century, he served as a mentor for Jamaican native and black nationalist leader Marcus Garvey and his Universal Negro

Improvement Association. While mostly residing in Great Britain, Ali came to the United States on at least three occasions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the 1920s, he helped found the Universal Islamic Society in Detroit, using his mission to promote a universal Pan-Islamic movement. Ali saw his mission as offering a modernized Islam that could be a uniting movement for people of color as an alternative to Western imperialism. While the Universal Islamic Society remained small, it became a foundation for later Pan-Islamic and Pan-Africanist movements. Other Muslim missions in America were homegrown. NOBLE DREW ALI founded the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America in Chicago in 1925. While incorporating influences from a variety of religions and secular movements, the group claimed to be Muslim. Drew Ali appealed to African Americans by giving them a new identity and homeland, claiming they were Asiatics descended from the Moors of Morocco. Speaking as a prophet, Ali taught that returning to Islam, their original faith, was the only way African Americans could escape racism. The movement spread to a number of cities in the 1920s and reached a membership of perhaps 30,000 at its height, but it lost ground after the 1940s.

The NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) may be the most successful missionary movement among African-American Muslims. Founded in 1930 by W. D. FARD, the NOI began to grow considerably under the leadership of ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975). Differing in significant aspects from Sunni Islam, the NOI preached racial separation and black pride. Similar to Noble Drew Ali, Elijah Muhammad called on African Americans to reclaim Islam, the original faith of their fathers, and overthrow white control.

The NOI achieved large-scale growth in the period after WORLD WAR II. Part of its success was due to its PRISON ministry. In 1942, the movement began to preach in prisons among incarcerated African Americans. Among the many new converts was MALCOLM X (1925–65), who became the chief spokesman for Elijah Muhammad and a national figure who brought additional converts and publicity to the movement. In 1961, the NOI also began publishing a newspaper, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, which became one of the largest minority weekly publications in the country and served as a vital medium for the group's message. While estimates vary, the NOI may have counted 20,000 members at its peak, but its influence far outstripped its numbers. With a firmly established mission, the NOI enlisted new members into its ranks but also reached those outside the movement with a message of black pride and resistance to American mainstream politics.

#### SUNNI MISSIONS TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS

With the growth of Ahmadi and NOI missionary movements in the United States, a number of new Muslim missionar-

ies sought to respond to what they considered to be these sectarian Islamic movements, and they began to encourage specifically indigenous African-American Muslims to adopt the Sunni tradition.

One such example was the work of WALI AKRAM (1904–94). An African-American convert to the Ahmadi tradition, Akram helped establish the First Cleveland Mosque in 1937. As Akram embraced Sunni Islam, he encouraged other African Americans to do the same. He conceived the mission of Islam in America not only as spiritual liberation but also as political and economic development within the African-American community. To achieve this mission, Akram established the Muslim Ten Year Plan in 1937 to advocate both religious revival and economic empowerment by working through established social structures.

Another Muslim missionary intent on spreading Sunni Islam among African Americans was MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN (1886–1957). A former leader within the Moorish Science Temple, Ezaldeen, like Akram, came to criticize his past tradition while embracing and proclaiming the Sunni tradition as an answer for spiritual and economic development among African Americans. Ezaldeen developed a religious curriculum that educated African Americans about Sunni Islam while also addressing political issues. In 1938, Ezaldeen established the ADDEYNU ALLAHE UNIVERSAL ARABIC ASSOCIATION (AAUAA). In promoting community development, Ezaldeen's AAUAA took an opposite approach from Akram's Muslim Ten Year Plan. Instead of engaging society, Ezaldeen separated from it by purchasing land and creating an independent Muslim community. Both approaches, however, demonstrated Muslim missionaries' interest in social issues.

A third figure, Sheikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal, was also an African-American Muslim missionary intent on converting Americans to Sunni Islam. Sometime before World War II, he established the Islamic Propagation Center of America in Brooklyn, New York. Faisal also illustrated his insistence on missionary work by referring to his State Street Mosque as the Islamic Mission of America. Constantly speaking and authoring pamphlets to inform and persuade Americans to embrace Islam as well as criticizing Christianity and American politics, he found his greatest audience among African Americans. The Islamic Mission of America achieved early success in integrating indigenous and immigrant Muslims in one mosque.

### SUFISM

Sufi missionaries to America have also achieved success among non-Muslims, largely through their willingness to adapt their traditions to the West. The first Sufi missionary to the United States was INAYAT KHAN (1882–1927), the Hindustani musician and Sufi master who arrived in the United States for a

tour in 1910. Averse to formal doctrine, Khan did not require his followers to convert officially to Islam and embraced a more universal approach to religion. Under the leadership of his son, VILAYAT INAYAT KHAN (1916–2004), the organization gained a greater audience in the 1960s among the educated elite and religious seekers. It has found particular success among WHITE MUSLIM AMERICANS.

Another one of many Sufi missionary movements in America is the BAWA MUYAIYADDEEN FELLOWSHIP. Established in Philadelphia in 1971 when its founder, Muhammed Raheem Bawa Muyaiyaddeen, came to the United States, the group attracted members drawn to its mystical tradition and its embrace of universal religious values. Over time, the fellowship has become more formally rooted as a Sufi movement while also adopting the basic tenets of Sunni Islam. The movement is most notable for its racial and ethnic diversity as well as its integration of men and women within the public practices of the community.

### INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS TO MUSLIM AMERICANS

In the second half of the 20th century, Muslims around the world became more concerned that Muslims immigrating to America would lose their commitment to the faith. As a part of a growing Islamic REVIVALISM, Muslim missionaries came to the United States in greater numbers. One explicitly proselytizing movement was the TABLIGHI JAMA'AT. Claiming that the propagation of Islam was the duty of all Muslims and not just the learned elite, its first missionaries entered the United States in 1952. While the movement now also attempts to convert non-Muslims, it originally concentrated on direct encounter with fellow Muslims to preach spiritual revival and a return to conservative ideals while avoiding ASSIMILATION to Western culture.

Islamist missionaries, or those Muslim missionaries who teach that Islam is both a religion and a state, have played a prominent missionary role as well. Many have advocated Islam as a total way of life and hope that through their missionary efforts that the United States might one day become a Muslim country. The followers of prominent Muslim thinkers such as Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb of the Muslim Brotherhood and Abdul A'la Mawdudi of the Jamaat-i Islami in Pakistan have translated a number of their writings into English, and they can be found as books and pamphlets in Islamic bookstores, mosques, and other public places. Of particular note for Americans is the Islamic Foundation led by Khuram Murad. While based in the United Kingdom, the Islamic Foundation has followed Jamaat-i Islami's ideology and financed a large number of English-language Islamic tracts written by Murad to be spread throughout the United States.

Another organization with a similar missionary purpose is the Muslim World League (MWL). Founded in 1962 by

a number of Muslim nations, the MWL is one of the largest nongovernmental Islamic organizations. While the MWL serves many functions, missionary work is one chief aim. Financed largely by Saudi Arabia, the MWL has funded English-language pamphlets and volumes of the Qur'an, the building of mosques, and the education of potential Muslim-American clerics and leaders. The first director of the MWL, Ahmad Satr, continued to serve as a professor, prolific writer, and speaker in the United States. Satr has identified his purpose as strengthening Muslims' identity and building greater understanding of Islam among a larger American audience. Often associated with WAHHABISM, a modern reformist version of Islam based on the thought of an 18th-century Arabian cleric, the MWL has been charged by conservative critics of Islam with having ties to terrorists. While terrorism committed by Saudi Muslims is clearly a fact of American life, no connection has been found between the MWL and terrorism, and the MWL, sponsored by countries that are often the target themselves of al-Qaeda and other Muslim extremists, has little to gain by promoting terrorism.

#### LOCALES FOR MUSLIM MISSIONS IN AMERICA

##### Mosques and Islamic Centers

One major locale for Muslim missions in America is MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS. In addition to serving the ritual religious needs of the Muslim community, these centers serve as a public presence for Muslims in America. They have also striven to educate both Muslims and non-Muslims in the faith. Many have maintained bookstores that carry a wide selection of mission literature. They have also engaged the community in dialogue on wider religious and public issues. The ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C., and the Islamic Da'wah Center in Houston are prominent examples.

##### Paramosque Organizations

While mosques and Islamic centers are one important aspect of Muslim mission, American paramosque organizations have also become vitally important. These largely national organizations unaffiliated with a local mosque often include missionary activity as a specific aspect of their organization. International Muslim university students funded the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA) in 1963 to focus on retaining and strengthening their faith while studying in the United States. By 2007, the MSA maintained more than 250 affiliate chapters in the United States and Canada. Over time, the organization's focus has shifted from Muslim students intent on returning to their native countries to a new generation of students developing a specific Muslim-American identity. The MSA has also sought to present Islam to non-Muslims through befriending and inviting fellow students into community, publishing literature, and educational events. The

MSA created an Islamic Teacher Center and Islamic Book Service to assist in their publication and educational efforts. While they have designed brochures such as *Islam at a Glance* and *Ten Unique Features of Islam* for explicit proselytizing efforts, the MSA also pursues mission through general community dialogue.

Another organization, the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA), grew out of the MSA in 1982. ISNA has served as an umbrella organization for many Muslims in the United States and has multiplied and subsumed many of the tasks begun by the MSA. While ISNA has offered a number of services to Muslim Americans, one of its tasks has been providing resources for missions. It has worked to engage in interfaith dialogue, educate the American public concerning Islam, and provide missionary literature for Muslim Americans.

The ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA (ICNA), established in the early 1970s to promote Muslim-American religious education, social services, and missionary work, has been successful in adapting mission to new technologies. In the 21st century, ICNA melded mission with advertising, launching a campaign in New York City subways prompting citizens to call a toll-free hotline, 1-877-Why-Islam, or visit a Web site to learn more about Islam. ICNA has also found U.S. prisons to be a major area for missionary activity. While accurate numbers of converts are difficult to obtain, some experts estimate that 300,000 people have converted to Islam while in U.S. prisons.

#### OTHER STRATEGIES FOR MUSLIM MISSIONS IN AMERICA

In addition to standard proselytizing literature, direct preaching, and opportunities for education and dialogue, missionaries employed by local mosques and national paramosque organizations have continued to adapt other approaches. One such missionary is South African Ahmed Deedat (1918–2005), who was a major influence on Muslim Americans by perfecting a form of Muslim apologetics, the art of defending one's position through persuasive argument. Best known for public debates with evangelical Christians and lectures that discussed Islam, Christianity, and the Bible, he attempted to equip Muslims to defend their faith against Christian missions while living faithfully in a Christian-majority society.

Another approach was that of ISMA'IL AL-FARUQI (1921–86), who founded the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT in 1981. Al-Faruqi advocated for what he called the "Islamization of Knowledge," which he saw as the key to bringing Islam into conversation with modern Western philosophies. In cross-training traditional Islamic scholars with modern Western social and physical science methodologies, al-Faruqi felt that his Islamization of Knowledge would make

Islam a recognizable and viable religious option for the West. Without advocating direct conversion of non-Muslims, al-Faruqi argued that reason had a strong foundation in the Qur'an, whose teachings supported this academic approach to Muslim mission.

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) is another example of missions among ISMA'ILI MUSLIM AMERICANS. Under the leadership of the AGA KHAN, the network in the United States has funded educational youth programs for immigrant Muslims, attempts at interfaith and inter-Muslim dialogue, and humanitarian aid for victims of disasters such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Another recent type of Muslim mission has developed among those who advocate a strongly Muslim-American identity, or what might even be called an American form of Islam. Muslim-American converts such as JEFFREY LANG (1954– ) and HAMZA YUSUF (1960– ) have begun to address how Islam must change to become a vibrant tradition in America while retaining the Muslim faith of the younger generation. These new voices have served as Muslim missionaries preaching a message of change.

### CONCLUSION

Throughout the history of Muslim Americans, Muslim missionaries have not always agreed on who should be a missionary, what mission methods should be employed, and who is to be the focus of their missionary efforts. Many missionaries have embraced the religious freedom guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution to maximize their missionary efforts. Some are hopeful that they can turn the United States into an Islamic country. Others have wanted to establish Muslim enclaves in the United States, seeking protection from racism and discrimination. Most Muslim-American missionaries, however, have assumed a lower profile for inviting people to become Muslims. Asking fellow Muslims to become model Americans—to work hard and give back—these Muslim-American missionaries envision a future in which Muslims compete in goodness, as a popular Qur'anic verse exhorts, with other Americans.

David P. King

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### Mohammed, W. D. (Wallace Delaney)

(1933–2008) *religious leader*

W. D. Mohammed assumed leadership of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) after his father's death in 1975. Undertaking a series of reforms, he radically changed the religious doctrines of the movement and its advocacy of racial separation and black nationalism. He encouraged his followers to adhere to the five pillars of Islam as practiced by Sunni Muslims, who constitute approximately 80 to 85 percent of all Muslims, and changed the name of the group to WORLD COMMUNITY OF AL-ISLAM IN THE WEST in 1976. In 1992, he became the first imam, or Muslim religious leader, to offer the invocation before a session of the U.S. Senate. Regarded by at least tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of Muslim Americans as their religious leader, he remained a central religious force in American religion until his death in 2008.

### GROWING UP IN THE NATION

Wallace Delaney Mohammed was born in DETROIT, MICHIGAN, on October 30, 1933. He was the seventh child of CLARA MUHAMMAD and ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, who was leading the NOI at the time of Wallace's birth. Although he grew up as a member of this "royal family"—his father would lead the NOI for more than 40 years—Wallace was raised largely by his mother. In 1934, the family moved to Chicago, and shortly thereafter Elijah Muhammad became a traveling preacher until his arrest in 1942 during WORLD WAR II for sedition and draft resistance. Wallace's father remained in prison until 1946.

After Elijah Muhammad was released from prison, he initiated a period of institutional growth within the NOI that included the opening of the University of Islam, as well





W. D. Mohammed greeted followers at a Saviour's Day convention in Chicago, Illinois, on February 26, 1975, the year he inherited the leadership of the Nation of Islam from his father, Elijah Muhammad, who is depicted in a large banner behind the stage. (AP Images)

as an elementary and a high school. Mohammed attended the school from 1952 to 1954, during which time he began learning Arabic. His high school experiences prepared him for the various roles he played within the NOI after graduation, including as a member of the FRUIT OF ISLAM (FOI), the all-male auxiliary of the movement. During a period spent as minister of the Philadelphia temple in 1958, Mohammed put his Arabic skills to use and delved into the teachings of the QUR'AN. He was careful to do so in ways that did not challenge his father's teachings, many of which conflicted with standard interpretations of Islam.

Mohammed's leadership of the Philadelphia temple ended on October 31, 1961, when he entered the Sandstone Correctional Institution in Minnesota to serve a prison term for draft evasion. Becoming eligible for the military draft in 1953, Mohammed had requested and was granted conscientious objector status. In 1957, however, he did not report for the civilian position he was assigned at a hospital in lieu of his service in the U.S. MILITARY. After a long legal battle, a

U.S. District Court sentenced him to three years for draft evasion in 1960. He served fewer than 15 months and was paroled on January 10, 1963.

#### QUESTIONING AND SEPARATION

According to Mohammed, his time in prison marked a period of personal spiritual growth, inspired by a close study of the Qur'an and the Bible. He saw prison as an opportunity to deepen his understanding of these texts and to read additional Islamic texts, and came to the belief that there was a serious conflict between his father's teachings and those of the larger Sunni Muslim community. When he was paroled in early 1963, Mohammed did not immediately break with his father's organization.

Not until questions of Elijah Muhammad's sexual improprieties arose later that year did significant tensions develop between father and son. By May 1964, Wallace had officially separated from the NOI. During this period of estrangement, he founded the Afro-Descendant Upliftment

Society, an organization that he hoped would provide him with the necessary financial base to remain separate from his father. But the organization failed to gather much support.

Mohammed's relationship to the NOI continued to be strained, and he feared for his life to such an extent that he sought FBI protection. When the prominent NOI speaker MALCOLM X was murdered in February 1965, Wallace returned to the NOI fold. This was not the end of his questioning and dissenting, however. In the following six years, he was banned from the NOI another two, three, perhaps four times. He was readmitted to the NOI in 1974 and quickly established himself as the successor to his ill father. No scholarly account has established how this prodigal son was able to regain his father's confidence late in life and rise above all the other would-be successors to Elijah Muhammad, including Muhammad's National Spokesman LOUIS FARRAKHAN (1933– ).

### CHANGING THE NATION

When Elijah Muhammad died on February 24, 1975, Mohammed had already positioned himself as the new leader of the NOI. He was supported, at least initially, by important NOI figures such as Louis Farrakhan, MUHAMMAD ALI, and his brother, Elijah Muhammad, Jr. The initial transition to his leadership, which many had feared would be tumultuous, was without incident.

But the following years were anything but placid, as Mohammed staged a massive upheaval of NOI structures and beliefs. Only two days after his father's death, Mohammed began addressing what he saw as problematic beliefs within the NOI, starting with the belief in the divinity of W. D. FARD, who had founded the NOI in 1930. Fard was a great spiritual master, he said, but he was not God.

Similarly, Mohammed explained that the NOI's teaching that white people were devils was allegorical, not literal. The apocalyptic belief that white people would be destroyed by a "mother ship" before the end of the world was reinterpreted by Mohammed as a belief that the "white mind"—that is, the racist mind—must be destroyed in all people. On June 15, 1975, before a crowd of 20,000 followers at Chicago's McCormick Place, Mohammed formally invited white people to join the NOI. Through all these changes, Mohammed argued that he was not rejecting his father's teachings but rather fulfilling his father's prophetic vision for the organization.

In October 1975, Mohammed instructed his believers to perform the *salat*, the daily PRAYER involving a series of prostrations and recitation of Qur'anic verses. He also asked all Muslims in Chicago to come together for prayer during Eid al-Fitr, the holiday marking the end of the dawn-to-sunset fasts during the month of Ramadan. In 1977, hundreds of his followers went on pilgrimage to Mecca. Over the following years, he asked ministers to call themselves imams,

or Muslim religious leaders, and he said that temples should become mosques, or *masjids*, after the original Arabic. He referred to himself as a *mujaddid*, an Islamic term meaning "renewer of the faith."

Instead of calling themselves Afro-Americans, in November 1975 Mohammed asked African Americans to label themselves "Bilalian," after the Muslim-African ancestor Bilal ibn Rabah. Bilal, the first person to issue the *ADHAN*, or call to prayer, was an Ethiopian slave in the 7th century who became one of the prophet Muhammad's companions. Mohammed's use of the "Bilalian" label paralleled other efforts in the era of black consciousness and ethnic revival to celebrate the African past of African Americans.

In addition, Mohammed and his followers began to adopt Muslim names, replacing the X that had stood in for the surname of most NOI members. Harvey 2X of Atlanta, for example, became Ahmad Karim. In 1976, Mohammed distributed a list of Muslim names with their meanings in English and invited followers to pick a name that suited them. Mohammed himself retained his last name—at the time spelled Muhammad rather than Mohammed—but he also adopted the name Warith Deen, meaning "inheritor of the faith." Later, he decided to be known simply by his initials, W. D., and spelled his last name as it had been spelled when he was a child: Mohammed.

This was not the only change in nomenclature instituted by Mohammed. In late 1976, he announced that the NOI would henceforth be known as the World Community of al-Islam in the West. Louis Farrakhan, who had initially supported Mohammed's leadership, broke with him in 1978 to reconstitute the Nation of Islam. Farrakhan returned to many of the original belief structures of the NOI, including the idea of black separatism. This split initiated more than two decades of rivalry between these leaders and their organizations, but in February 2000, the two reconciled in an attempt by Farrakhan to bring the NOI more in line with Sunni Islamic practices. Over the years, Farrakhan garnered the most media attention, but Mohammed drew the most followers.

Mohammed continued to experiment with new names for his community of followers. In 1980, the World Community of al-Islam in the West became the American Muslim Mission (AMM). In 1997, the AMM became known as the American Moslem Society and then, in 2002, as the American Society of Muslims.

### MUSLIM-AMERICAN SUNNI LEADER

From the 1980s until his death in 2008, W. D. Mohammed remained a popular leader in the African-American Muslim community, even if many African-American Muslims, including his own followers, may have disagreed with one or another of his views—especially his support of

the U.S.-led coalition to remove the Iraqi army from Kuwait in 1991. Thousands of followers regularly attended his speeches at universities and convention centers, often traveling great distances to see their imam share his thoughts on various topics during talks that would last two hours or more. Like his father, Mohammed was not a skilled orator. His charisma arose from different attributes. Many found him to be an excellent model by virtue of his unassuming and authentic manner. Sometimes appearing with pencil and a notepad at his lectures, followers would take careful notes on his comments about how the Qur'an and the Sunna, or Tradition, of the prophet Muhammad should be applied to everyday life.

Mohammed consistently emphasized that he did not desire a cult of personality, encouraging Muslims to devote themselves instead to reading the Qur'an and following its guidance. A sometimes reluctant leader of his community, he moved on two separate occasions, once in 1985 and again in 2003, to relinquish organizational responsibility so that he could focus on teaching, preaching, philanthropy, and business activities. Though he remained the de facto leader of an informal network of mosques around the country until his death in 2008, he encouraged each community to take responsibility for its own fate and to hold elections for a board of directors.

Mohammed's work was frequently praised in this period for its focus on reconciliation. He strove to bring SUNNI MUSLIM AMERICANS together as a community, serving in honorary positions or attending the meetings of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA and the MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY. He was also a leading figure in global INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS and became involved in the Focolare movement, a Roman Catholic group that has stressed unity and love among all peoples, regardless of religious identity. In 1997, after establishing a friendship with Chiara Lubich, Focolare's leader, Mohammed invited Lubich to speak to Muslims at the Malcolm Shabazz Mosque in NEW YORK CITY. The two had an affinity for each other and appeared at several events together. Mohammed also communicated with Pope John Paul II on at least two occasions. In 1996, he led a small delegation of Muslims in an audience with the pope. Mohammed visited the Vatican again in 1999 and gave an address with both Pope John Paul II and the Dalai Lama present.

The powerful presence Mohammed commanded within the Muslim-American community is illustrated further by the public events in which he was asked to represent Muslim Americans. In 1992, he became the first Muslim to give the invocation in the U.S. Senate. One year later, and then again in 1997, Mohammed was invited to read verses from the Qur'an during President Bill Clinton's inaugural interfaith prayer service.

Mohammed was married at least four times, including two marriages to his first wife, Shirley, and a final marriage to Khadijah Siddeeq. One of Mohammed's nine children, NGina Muhammad-Ali, worked on the *Muslim Journal*. Another of his progeny, Wallace Mohammed II, served in a leadership role in his father's charitable organization, Mosque Cares.

## CONCLUSION

W. D. Mohammed played a formative role in the religious history of the Muslim-American community. From bringing the majority of NOI followers to identify with Sunni Islam to representing the community at public events, Mohammed had a profound impact. His tireless work included bridging the gaps between Muslim Americans, meeting with leaders of different faiths, and promoting the faith across the world. His death on September 9, 2008, marked a great loss for the Muslim-American community.

See also FARD, W. D.

Shawntel L. Ensminger

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## W. D. Mohammed

**First Muslim Invocation in the U.S. Senate** (1992) *Imam W. D. Mohammed (1933–2008), the son of Elijah Muhammad, aligned the Nation of Islam more closely with Sunni Islamic religious practices in the 1970s. On February 6, 1992, Mohammed became the first Muslim imam to offer the invocation before a daily session of the U.S. Senate. The tradition of opening meetings of the Senate with prayer dates to 1789, the first year that the Senate met. As one of its first acts, the Senate elected a chaplain, who ministered to senators and their families in addition to offering prayers before Senate sessions. Though all of the elected chaplains in the 19th and 20th centuries were Protestant Christians, by the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the Senate invited guest chaplains of every world religious tradition, including Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism, to give the prayer. According to the comments of Senators Paul Simon (D-Ill.) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), W. D. Mohammed's advocacy of interreligious and inter-racial harmony made him an appropriate choice as the first Muslim to do so.*





The Imam Wallace D. Mohammed, Calumet City, IL, offered the following prayer:

Our Creator, the merciful benefactor, the merciful Redeemer who opens for all people a way to have good conscience and a good life:

Grant to this Nation that Americans continue to live as a prosperous nation of “many in one” and as a people of faith taking pride in human decency, industry, and service.

Let us pray that this great Nation’s two centuries of national life may inspire other nations to move toward social and economic justice for all.

Grant that her big heart for charity, compassion, repentance, and mercy continue to beat strongly within all of us. Grant that Americans always have more hope than troubles and ever grow in goodness and in wisdom.

Bless Americans to always cherish our freedom and the noble essence of the American people.

Grant that we Americans understand better our brothers and sisters around the world and reject unsuitable national pride for a global community of brotherhood and peace.

Bring all citizens and Government together, those of great means and small means, to appreciate more our Nation’s solemn pledge of liberty, peace, and justice for all.

Bless our homes and our schools.

Bless the parents, our troubled youth, our burdened inner cities to never be without hope or direction. Bless Americans to keep to the best of our ways.

Bless Americans to cherish more the pride of industry.

Bless the efforts of the President and all other efforts in progress for more jobs and more opportunity to be in this great society for more of us.

Bless matrimony and families here and in all the world.

Increase for the President of the United States, for every Member of the Senate, and for every Member of the House of Representatives, the excellence of man’s spirit and the excellence of the intellect of the statesmen so that they may build a better America for us all. Amen.

\* \* \*

Mr. SIMON. Mr. President [of the Senate], history was made in a small way this morning. We

had an invocation by Imam Mohammed, the first Muslim to offer an invocation here in the U.S. Senate.

I think it is important that we reach out to one another, whether we are Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, whatever our belief or lack of belief. This morning’s *Washington Post* has a story about Muslims fleeing persecution from what we have generally called Burma in the past.

The intolerance that is around the world in too many places is a cause for grief and is a cause for bloodshed and tragedy. What has happened this morning is the Imam Mohammed, is known in the Chicago area and around the Nation for reaching out to people of other beliefs and for preaching tolerance and understanding—his presence here today is, first of all, a tribute to him. I was pleased to join my colleagues, Senator [Alan] Dixon [D-Ill.] and Senator Hatch, in co-hosting his presence here today.

But it is a reminder to all of us, whatever our beliefs; yes, be firm in your beliefs, but also do not let excessive pride cause disruptions in our society, whether it is on the basis of religion, race, national background, or what it is. I hope today is one more small step in creating a nation and a world where there is more understanding.

\* \* \*

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I would like to join in the remarks of my distinguished and great colleagues from Illinois. This is a great day for the U.S. Senate and for our country in having Imam Wallace Mohammed with us today, the first Muslim to pray in the U.S. Senate. We could not have made a better choice. There is not a better man in America or better religious leader who is trying to do what is right for his people in the inner cities, in jobs, in teachings of morality and decency, and in so many ways that help those who need help, to lend a helping hand.

Mohammed is a great man. He is a kind man. He is a compassionate man. He is a decent man. And it is an honor for us to have him in the Senate this day. I think it is fair to note that some of his greatest friends are sitting in the gallery today, some of whom are known by people all over the world, people of all faiths, of all religions. So we have made great strides today in the Senate, and I think the Senate is honored to have this great religious leader with us. I look forward to continuing an association and friendship with



him and with his people for many years to come in the future.



Source: *Congressional Record* (Senate) 138, no. 14, 102nd Congress 2nd Session, February 6, 1992, S1103-S1104.

## Moorish Science Temple

The Moorish Science Temple of America (MSTA) began in 1925 in CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, under the leadership of Timothy Drew (1886–1929), more commonly known within his religious community as NOBLE DREW ALI. Ali founded the Canaanite Temple, a precursor to the MSTA, in Newark, New Jersey, in 1913. It was in Chicago, however, where the MSTA would make its mark on Muslim-American history. The MSTA was initially incorporated as the Moorish Holy Temple of Science before being renamed in 1928. It would grow to include followers throughout urban and rural regions in the northern, Midwestern, and southern states. The history and development of the MSTA has been largely shaped by its message of a Moorish, Islamic heritage for blacks, respect for other religions, and an emphasis on social uplift.

### BEGINNINGS

Ali was born Timothy Drew in North Carolina, eventually making his way to Chicago in his adult years. The details of Ali's early life are unknown. He claimed to have traveled to Egypt to study with a mystical teacher from whom he received esoteric knowledge of divine truths. It is evident from his theology and the MSTA's early development, however, that American religious traditions of Islam and Freemasonry were the basis for Ali's religious leadership. The MSTA emerged in the post–World War I years of growing urbanization, as hundreds of thousands of African-American southerners streamed to the northern urban centers seeking better jobs and relief from white mob violence, especially lynching. Ali was among these migrants. Northern cities like Chicago, DETROIT, NEW YORK CITY, and Philadelphia seemed to offer a needed change and greater opportunity. In addition, religious and social influences like Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association had introduced to millions of blacks the idea that they should actually take pride in their racial identity instead of internalizing self-hatred and a sense of inferiority. Most important, in the 1920s, the U.S. Supreme Court continued to interpret segregation law as constitutional, and white public officials typically viewed the nation as properly white, denying basic rights to blacks. Into this environment Ali entered with a message proclaiming an ethnic religion of Islam for black Americans.

### TEACHINGS

Timothy Drew would come to identify himself as “Noble” Drew Ali, a prophet whose message of salvation to “so-called Negroes” claimed for them a rich history based on their own culture with distinctive clothing, geographic origin, and, most important, their own religion—Islam. Although Ali desired to create pride among blacks, he rejected America's racial labels like “black,” “colored,” and “Negro.” Most essential was his message that these “so-called Negroes” were in fact Moorish Americans, descended from the ancient Moabites described in the Bible. Their homeland was Morocco. Because of their religious and geographic roots, Ali emphasized to his followers that they should properly recognize themselves as members of the larger “Asiatic” race, a category in which Ali included all peoples of color. Every nation or race, according to Ali, possessed its own national religion. So Christianity belonged to Europeans. Ali taught that he had been chosen to deliver a divine message to Moorish Americans, reminding them of their true identity (Moorish) and true religion (Islam). He introduced a Moorish national flag, a red banner bearing a five-pointed green star. Ali also presented to these Moorish Americans their own “divinely prepared” scriptures, the *Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America*, also called the *Circle Seven Koran*. This text related a history of the Moabites and other Canaanite peoples and also described the activities of Jesus in Asiatic lands. The oppressed status of blacks as second-class citizens was the fundamental problem to which Ali responded; white Americans treated blacks as if they did not belong in the United States, as an unwanted “white man's burden.” Ali believed that if black Americans embraced their true Moorish “nationality” (as he termed it), the U.S. government under which they lived and all other nations would respect so-called Negroes and regard them as a people with a history and who merited dignity.

Since most early converts to the MSTA were former Protestants, Ali's teachings about Jesus and Christianity were especially important. Ali emphasized the origins of Christianity within the ancient Roman Empire. Christianity, he taught, was the religion of the “pale skin” European Romans who executed Jesus, whom Ali identified as a member of the Moabite nation, one of the Asiatic races. Jesus was a prophet whose mission, according to Ali, was to rescue the Jewish nation from rule by the “pale skin nations of Europe.” As the *Circle Seven Koran* explained to its readers, European Christians, after executing Jesus, enjoyed a peaceful existence for many centuries until “Muhammad the first” (i.e., Muhammad ibn Abdallah of seventh-century Arabia) arrived on the scene to “fulfill the will of Jesus” by formally establishing the first Muslim community. In this way, Ali attempted to reclaim Jesus as a person of color from his symbolic use by white American Christians who typically promoted anti-black racism with no hint of irony.



This picture of the 1928 convention of the Moorish Science Temple in Chicago featured movement founder Noble Drew Ali (*first row, standing, fifth from left*). Ali's Islamic symbols and clothing were generally adapted from the Black Shriners, an African-American fraternal organization. (Photographs and Prints Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations)

The response to Ali's message of Moorish redemption was considerable. In Chicago, where the MSTA headquarters was established, Moorish Americans commanded public respectability until Ali's suspicious death in 1929. Working with his wife, Pearl Jones Drew Ali, Noble Drew Ali and other MSTA members organized parades and public celebrations of an ancient Moorish heritage that drew large crowds, including local political leaders. The pages of the *Chicago Defender* provided positive coverage of the movement, which was a major public relations asset. The MSTA also established the Moorish Manufacturing Company to produce oils, incense, soaps, and other Moorish products, the sales from which buoyed the religion's financial base. From New York City to Kansas City, Kansas, to Belzoni, Mississippi, MSTA converts

established temples and vibrant communities of faith with a resounding message of renewal through reclaiming a religious heritage that stretched from ancient Palestine to Arabia to the empires of northern Africa.

Especially important were elements of the religion that communicated as sense of ethnic identity. Followers received new names ending in "Bey" or "El" to denote their Moorish ancestry. They paid nominal membership dues (ranging from 50 cents to two dollars in the 1920s and 1930s) and, in exchange, received membership cards certifying that their identity was not Negro but "Moorish American." Male members wore the fez to distinguish themselves. During formal events, men and women donned robes that suggested an Eastern style of dress. The *Circle Seven Koran*, along with

other instructional literature of the MSTA, grounded followers in a compelling worldview that emphasized the value of having a heritage and gaining respect for themselves.

Many members of the MSTA were inspired by these teachings to defy segregation laws, claiming that such laws did not apply to them since they were Moors and not “so-called Negroes.” Like all other religious movements throughout history, including earlier expressions of Islam, the MSTA drew on their immediate environment to express their religion. The public parades and attire of Shriners influenced Ali’s choice of clothing, and the swell of interest in “lost traditions” about Jesus, especially Levi Dowling’s *Aquarian Gospel* (1908), provided the basis for the *Holy Koran* that Ali published.

The MSTA departed from the sexist leadership pattern that dominated most American religious establishments. Although Ali did not formally stipulate shared authority among women and men, he chose from the beginning to include women in leadership. In 1928, he ordained and appointed M. Whitehead-El (the aunt of his wife, Pearl) to lead one of the Chicago temples. In the 1930s, three of the MSTA’s “Grand Governors” were women; in this capacity, they held either regional or state authority in Illinois, Tennessee, and New Jersey.

The MSTA, under Noble Drew Ali’s leadership, also introduced the American religious public to the first institutional critique of American slavery as a process of religious cultural destruction. Instead of celebrating the Christianization of blacks, the MSTA lamented that Islam had been stripped from American’s black slaves. This analysis of slavery would be followed most notably by the NATION OF ISLAM beginning in the 1930s and by Yoruba revivalism in the 1950s. The MSTA also instituted holidays that continue to be observed today. These include January 8, the birthday of Prophet Noble Drew Ali, and January 15, the Moorish New Year. In addition, the MSTA holds an annual national convention in September.

#### NOBLE DREW ALI’S DEATH AND FACTIONS

Most of the formal assemblies of the Chicago Moors occurred in Unity Hall, a brick building on Chicago’s Indiana Avenue that the MSTA purchased in 1926 for such purposes. The MSTA enjoyed general favor in the public eye until the time of Ali’s suspicious death. In March 1929, Claude Greene, who had formerly worked with Ali as a business manager for the MSTA, was shot and stabbed. His violent death led the Chicago police to arrest Ali along with dozens of other Moors. Ali was suspected to be behind the murder because of testimony that he and Greene had parted ways and were competing for followers. Meanwhile, public sentiment soured as local media produced negative reports of the prophet, alleging sex scandals and financial exploitation. Ali was eventually

released on \$10,000 bail, but within days he was found dead in his apartment. The cause of his death was never resolved, but his followers suspected police abuse.

Noble Drew Ali’s untimely death brought competing interests to the surface of the religious community. During his lifetime, some MSTA members had begun flashing their membership cards before whites to protest racist treatment, and others had become vocally critical of the federal government. Ali had sought to dampen both of these trends. After his death, some followers insisted that they had inherited Ali’s spirit and should be recognized as his successor. Among these was Ali’s chauffeur, Timothy Givens-El. He assumed the name Noble Drew Ali Reincarnated Muhammad III, and he led a faction of followers to organize a formally separate body of Moors, which he called the Moorish Science Temple Divine and National Movement of North America. After his arrest, Ali had appointed a follower named Ford-El to lead the main temple in Chicago. But Ford-El moved to Detroit and, under the name W. D. FARD, organized what became the Nation of Islam. E. Mealy-El, as governor and supreme grand sheik of Temple No. 1 in Chicago, also led a competing faction. Eventually, however, the majority of Moors would recognize the leadership of Charles Kirkman-Bey, who was supreme grand adviser of Chicago’s Temple No. 9. Until his death in 1959, Kirkman-Bey traveled to temples throughout the country to reestablish unity and to rebuild the MSTA’s momentum, which had floundered under the impact of Ali’s death.

#### DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNMENT

##### SUPPRESSION: 1940s TO 1970s

The most tumultuous period for the MSTA began in the 1940s as the United States enforced the Selective Service Act and instituted the draft, preparing to enter WORLD WAR II. The MSTA, since its origins, had emphasized loyalty to the federal government while calling for worldwide unity among peoples of color and fair treatment as citizens. By 1941, however, many MSTA temples encouraged their male members to refuse registration for the draft in a war against Japan, a “colored” nation, because African Americans themselves were denied citizenship rights by a federal government that openly espoused white supremacy and enforced racial discrimination in the military, public education, voting, public transportation, and other aspects of life. The result was a decades-long process whereby the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) suppressed the MSTA, classifying Moors as a threat to national security, claiming they were sponsored by Japan, and describing them as poorly educated fanatics because of their belief in racial equality.

The FBI successfully planted numerous informants in local temples, threatened to prosecute local Moorish leaders to frighten them into ceasing their religious work, and



eavesdropped on the MSTA's religious meetings. The MSTA's national leader, Kirkman-Bey, like other members of the Moorish Science Temple, predictably became a frequent target of FBI surveillance. Most devastating was a series of mass arrests by the FBI in the 1940s, which took its toll on the religious community. During this time, the leadership of women in the MSTA, formally organized as the Sisters National Auxiliary, was crucial in sustaining the work and worship of the temples. In the 1950s and 1960s, FBI repression against a number of black religious and secular organizations was intensified under the implementation of the U.S. Department of Justice's Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO), and the MSTA continued to suffer severe repression. Some minor progress was made, however, as federal authorities gradually began to regard the MSTA more seriously as a bona fide religious community. For the first time, a few MSTA members were legally permitted to petition their status as conscientious objectors to war.

#### INSTITUTIONAL CONTINUITY: 1970s TO PRESENT

In 1975, one of the smaller sects of the Moorish Science Temple, led by Richardson Dingle-El, relocated their headquarters from Illinois to Maryland. Sheik Richardson Dingle-El, who had led the Moorish Science Temple National and Divine Movement during the era of the Civil Rights movement, devoted much of his work to seeking reparations for blacks from the federal government of the 1950s and 1960s. His brother, Timothy Dingle-El, wrote a history of this particular Moorish American group, *The Resurrection of the Moorish Science Temple*. This smaller group has continued to publish its organ *Moorish Voice* from its Chicago center.

Meanwhile, the larger body of Moors continued under the national leadership of R. Love-El, who in 1971 followed J. Blakely-Bey as the supreme grand adviser and moderator. With the ongoing struggle to implement desegregation in the 1960s and 1970s and the rapid urbanization of blacks, more African Americans encountered racist police departments; imprisonment was becoming the fate of numerous urban blacks. In this context, Love-El led the MSTA to develop a formidable prison ministry network, which continues today. Since its beginning, the MSTA has published periodicals to communicate with membership and to represent its religious interests, including the *Moorish Review*, *Moorish American Voice*, and *Moorish Guide National Edition*. Such publications continue to serve a vital function. Like other organizations, the MSTA has established an Internet presence as well. In 2002, R. Jones-Bey became the grand sheik and moderator (national leader) of the MSTA, following the death of R. Love-El. The slate of local and national leaders, moreover, has fully retained its commitment to a balance of men and women.

The contemporary concerns of African-American Islam, as with other religious communities, continue to shift over the decades. Nevertheless, the continuity of the MSTA is evident in the Moors' abiding emphasis on the importance of possessing a heritage, since Ali taught that an ethnic heritage affords a people the ability to command respect as Americans. Although its most dynamic years of growth seem to have passed, the MSTA, with more than 40 temples and a few thousand members, continues to thrive as a vital part of the varieties of Islamic faiths in the United States today.

Sylvester Johnson

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#### Juanita Richardson-Bey, "Dio de Mio" (1929)

*The success of Islamic movements among African Americans has often been explained partly as a result of these movements' attractiveness to men. The Nation of Islam in the 1960s and some late 20th-century Sunni Muslim communities have been viewed as groups in which men attempt to assert their patriarchal authority over women—reclaiming the black manhood, as Malcolm X described it, that they had lost during the era of slavery. But the association of*



*African-American Islamic communities with men wrongly ignores the history of African-American women, who have helped to build and sustain black Muslim groups since the 1920s. One such movement is the Moorish Science Temple of America, established by Noble Drew Ali in 1925. In his organization, women ascended to the highest levels of authority next to Ali himself. C. Alsop Bey was a governess in Chicago, while Sister Lomax Bey was grand governess of Detroit. Sister Whitehead-El was the head of a temple located at 862 Townsend Street in Chicago. Juanita Mayo Richardson-Bey played a different role. As managing editor of the newspaper Moorish Guide, she helped to shape the news that the movement reported to the outside world. She was also a poet who recited her own work and the poems of others at organizational gatherings. In the 1929 poem below, Richardson-Bey expresses thanks for the comfort that faith in God/Allah gives her and asks for God's presence in the year ahead, the very year in which Noble Drew Ali, her prophet, would be killed.*



#### Dio de Mio [God of Mine]

There's peace within thy walls—Almighty Allah  
 The prayers of Israel's children soothe my mind;  
 And all the restlessness of me is calmed;  
 My futile heartaches vanish as I pray  
 The loneliness that haunted all my days,  
 E'en when I mingled with the crowds, is gone;

I feel the force and strength of calm companionship,  
 Uniting me with all Thy quiet strength.  
 Oh all these years I battled with myself,  
 Denying fiercely there was any God-Allah;  
 And all I found was emptiness in life,  
 Until today when something led me here,  
 And midst the prayers of Israel I find peace.

My Allah—and Allah of all my fathers  
 Hear my supplication—In the coming year  
 Be with me, with me when the road is dark with  
 doubt,  
 Be with me when the haunting loneliness  
 Would crush my spirit down to the depths.  
 Oh! Never let me know the emptiness.



Source: *Moorish Guide*, 1929.

#### **Moorish Science Temple, Inc. v. Smith**

*Moorish Science Temple, Inc. v. Smith* (1982) is among the most significant court cases dealing with dietary restrictions

among Muslim prison inmates. This case, which was decided by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York City in 1982, determined that prison authorities must provide diets consistent with their inmates' religious beliefs while they are incarcerated. The court ruled that failure to accommodate religious dietary restrictions is a violation of First Amendment rights to the free exercise of religion.

In *Moorish Science Temple, Inc. v. Smith*, R. Smallwood-El alleged that his First Amendment rights to freedom of religion had been violated while he was incarcerated at Attica Correctional Facility in New York for burglary. He filed a suit against Harold J. Smith, superintendent of the prison, and argued his case before the United States District Court for the Western District of New York in 1976. Smallwood-El, a member of the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, claimed that prison officials provided Jewish inmates with alternative diets that conformed to the requirements of their religion but refused to accommodate the dietary restrictions of members of his religion. In addition to his charge about his rights to practice his religion, Smallwood-El also challenged the state proceedings leading to his arrest and alleged that his constitutional rights had also been violated because he was held in isolation for 23 hours per day without a hearing. Smallwood-El contended that the state had not complied with habeas corpus requirements in his case. These requirements stipulate that the state must bring prisoners before the court to decide whether the state has the proper authority to confine them. The district court determined that Smallwood-El had failed to exhaust all available state remedies for his habeas corpus claims and dismissed his petition.

Smallwood-El appealed the court's decision. In 1982, the appellate court upheld the lower court's decision that Smallwood-El had failed to exhaust all available state remedies for his habeas corpus claims but reversed its decision regarding the conditions of his confinement. The appellate court determined that Smallwood-El's constitutional rights had been violated because he was denied a diet that conformed to his religious beliefs and was held in isolation without a proper disciplinary hearing. The court maintained that the state must provide Muslim inmates with diets that conform to Islamic dietary requirements.

This decision affirmed the precedent set in 1975 with *Kahane v. Carlson*, in which the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit determined that the denial of kosher food in prison was a violation of the First Amendment, and extended the same considerations to Muslim prisoners. Two similar cases, however, challenged the legal interpretations set forth in *Kahane v. Carlson* and *Moorish Science Temple, Inc. v. Smith*. In *Jihaad v. Carlson* (1976), the U.S. District Court for Eastern Michigan ruled that prisoners cannot be forced to eat pork products but are not entitled to a special diet. The court cited an earlier case, *Knuckles v. Prasse* (1970), as the

precedent for its decision. In *Barnes v. Virgin Islands* (1976), the U.S. District Court for the Virgin Islands urged prison officials to make reasonable efforts to provide Rastafarian and Muslim inmates with diets that conformed to their religious dietary restrictions but did not require them to do so.

Tammy Heise

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#### Mos Def (1973– ) rap singer, actor

Mos Def is an American rapper and actor from Brooklyn, New York. Born Dante Terrell Smith on December 11, 1973, Mos Def emerged as a major force in the underground hip-hop scene in the late 1990s as a part of a new wave of socially conscious rappers who celebrated political consciousness and Afrocentric themes. In 1998, he received widespread acclaim for his breakthrough album with the group Black Star, formed with rapper Talib Kweli and producer Hi-Tek, entitled *Mos Def and Talib Kweli Are Black Star*. His performances on that album achieved fame for their complex free-styles (improvisations), the distinctive quality of his voice, and cogent, pro-black political messages. In 1999, Mos Def produced a solo album, *Black on Both Sides*, which further cemented his reputation as one of the most talented rappers of his time. Both albums are widely regarded as hip-hop classics. Since then, he has released three albums, *The New Danger* (2004), *True Magic* (2006), and *Mos Definite* (2007), though the latter was not released in the United States.

Following the release of *Black on Both Sides*, Mos Def turned the bulk of his professional attentions toward acting, and he is one of the few rappers to transition successfully into stage, screen, and film work. Since 2000, he has enjoyed critical and commercial success as an actor, costarring in films such as Spike Lee's *Bamboozled* (2000), the Oscar-nominated *Monster's Ball* (2001), and Hollywood blockbusters *The Italian Job* (2003) and *16 Blocks* (2006). In 2002, he made his Broadway debut in Suzan Lori-Park's Tony-nominated, Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Topdog/Underdog*, and in 2005 garnered an Emmy nomination for his role in the made-for-TV movie *Something the Lord Made*. He has also served as host for HBO's award-winning spoken word series, *Def Poetry Jam*, since its debut in 2001.

Mos Def has been an outspoken social critic and political activist throughout his career, speaking frequently on issues of black empowerment and America's involvement in the War on Terror. In 2004, he released "Bin Laden" (recorded with rapper Eminem), a controversial song that blamed the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, on what he viewed

as the destructive policies of Republican presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush. Released the following year, his single "Katrina Clap" criticized the government's response to Hurricane Katrina. He has also worked extensively on campaigns protesting the prison sentences of African-American journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal and African-American Muslim imam JAMIL ABDULLAH AL-AMIN (formerly known as H. Rap Brown). A devout Sunni Muslim, Mos Def's father, a former member of the NATION OF ISLAM who later joined the congregation of Imam W. D. MOHAMMED, first introduced the rapper/actor to Islam at age 13. He became a Muslim six years later at age 19, after meeting other Muslim rappers such as Q-Tip and Ali Shaheed Muhammad from A TRIBE CALLED QUEST.

Mos Def opens many of his albums and performances with the words "Bismallah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem" (In the name of God, the most gracious, the most merciful) and credits his Islamic faith as the driving force behind his involvement with social issues, declaring in an interview with Beliefnet.com, "If Islam's sole interest is the welfare of mankind, then Islam is the strongest advocate of human rights anywhere on Earth."

Sylvia Chan-Malik

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**Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood** See AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS.

#### mosques and Islamic centers

Most simply defined, a mosque, or *masjid*, is a place where Muslims perform the *salat*, the prayer in which they prostrate themselves in the direction of Mecca as many as five times per day. Muslims also pray in other spaces, which are sometimes known by different names. For example, the recitation of *DHIKR*, or litanies reciting the names of God in addition to other rituals of piety, can take place in Sufi lodges, often called *tekkes* or *khanaqas*. Shi'a Muslims, in addition to praying in mosques, also conduct a number of PRAYER rituals in *IMAMBARGAHS*, *husayniyas*, and *JAMAATKHANAS*.

The DRUZE COMMUNITY offers its prayers in the *majlis*. For most Muslims in the United States, however, the mosque is the primary space for weekly congregational prayer and the preferred site for daily prayer.

By the beginning of the 21st century, there were more than 2,000 mosques and Islamic centers throughout the United States. From its modest beginning as an informal space of gathering for America's first Muslims in the 17th and 18th centuries, to elaborate, architecturally sophisticated structures confidently proclaiming Muslims as permanent citizens in the United States, the mosque has provided a space for spiritual reflection, congregation, EDUCATION, and social and cultural activities for Muslim Americans. Mosques and Islamic centers have built and reinforced communal, ethnic, and religious solidarity. For Muslims and non-Muslims alike, the mosque has become an important symbol of Islam in the United States and a marker of the religion's presence in the country.

A number of terms have been used historically for "mosque" among Americans, ranging from "*masjid*," a word derived from Arabic but also prevalent in a number of other languages of the Muslim world, to the more generic "temple," preferred by some early groups of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS such as the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America and the NATION OF ISLAM. Serving a variety of urban and rural communities, ethnic groupings, and a range of Muslims from diverse branches of Islam, the mosque is for many Muslims the center not only of their religious and cultural life but also a marker of their Muslim-American identity and a reminder of the religion's continued presence in the United States.

### THE FIRST AMERICAN MOSQUES

While the first purpose-built mosques were constructed in the early decades of the 20th century, Muslims had been gathering in temporary spaces since their earliest days in the Thirteen Colonies and, later, the United States. The earliest Muslim-American prayer spaces were used by AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES from the 17th to the 19th centuries. The earliest Muslim Americans practiced their religion and maintained their identities mainly by praying informally in their living quarters, in the woods, or in nearly any other place. Without the means or freedoms to build designated spaces, these Muslims "created" spaces in which to contemplate and pray.

These were the earliest of American *masjids* in the technical sense—literally places of prostration—and they served the thousands of Muslim slaves who were brought to the United States from sub-Saharan West Africa, which itself had seen the spread of Islam before and during the period of the transatlantic slave trade. While some slaves were illiterate and had limited access to education, others were leaders of their communities and teachers of the QUR'AN. As a result, their religious practices and systems of prayer varied from

the recitation of the *salat*, one of the pillars of Sunni Islamic practice, to the recitation of *dhikr*, or religious litanies.

### EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS

Between 1875 and 1912, immigration to the United States from various regions of the Ottoman Empire was set in motion, as many sought to make their fortunes in America. Most of these early Muslim immigrants were from former Ottoman territories today known as Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine. Following the pattern of emigration in the 19th century, Arab Christians arrived in larger numbers first, being exposed more readily to prospects of moving westwards and aware that their religion was shared outside their own borders and boundaries. They were soon joined by an increasing number of Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, as well as by their Druze and Alawi coreligionists.

Early Arab-American Muslims settled first in the Midwest, including NORTH DAKOTA; CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA; Michigan City, Indiana; and DETROIT, MICHIGAN. Since many planned at some point to return to their homelands, they did not build stand-alone mosques but instead used simple, informal, or rented spaces such as converted fire-halls, churches, basements, theaters, and warehouses. With the eventual collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the turmoil brought on by WORLD WAR I, however, many more immigrant Muslims made the United States their permanent homes and invited their relatives to settle in their newfound land. As a result, individuals gradually formed large family networks and began to focus on practical and religious needs such as sanctifying marriages and burying their dead in Islamic CEMETERIES. Accordingly, it became necessary to think about more permanent structures to facilitate the religious needs of the community.

A number of buildings—most of which were in the Midwestern United States—emerged during this period as America's first purpose-built mosques. With the intention of blending into their environment, each of these buildings resembled their architectural surroundings. In 1921, Detroit's Muslim leaders celebrated the opening of the Moslem Mosque with a parade that attracted hundreds from the local Muslim community. Shi'a imam Kalil Bazy, AHMADI MUSLIM-AMERICAN leader Muhammad Sadiq, and others were on hand to thank Lebanese-American real estate developer Muhammad Karoub for building the mosque. Karoub's brother, HUSSIEN KAROUB (1892–1973), a Sunni Muslim, became the mosque's leader.

Despite the fanfare that greeted the mosque's opening, it operated for only a few years, then was purchased by the city of Highland Park in 1926. But Karoub remained a popular pastor, often traveling to offer guest lectures or raise money for other Muslim-American imams. One of the legacies of



this mosque and of other early mosques was to establish its prayer leader as a congregational minister in the mold of other American pastors, including Christian-American ministers and Jewish-American rabbis. Like his pastoral compatriots, Karoub and the early generation of Muslim imams often oversaw the weddings of Muslims and their burials, offered advice and informal counseling, raised money for other congregations and various causes, and acted as liaisons between Muslims and non-Muslims. The mosque and its imam became quintessentially American institutions.

American influences also appeared in the architectural styles of mosques. In 1929, in Ross, North Dakota, a building set into a shallow trench in the earth and reminiscent of a granary or other farm structure became the only purpose-built mosque for Muslim Americans in North Dakota. It was used by the town's Muslim community until the 1960s but was never completed because of the GREAT DEPRESSION and later because of a number of other social and economic pressures on Ross's Muslim community. Over time, as the small Muslim prairie community struggled to maintain its numbers and through an increasing number of marriages to Christians as well as conversions, the mosque fell out of use and was eventually torn down.

In 1919, Muslims in Michigan City, Indiana, began to meet for congregational prayer on a regular basis through their organization, the Modern Age Arabian Islamic Society.

But they did not build their own mosque until 1934. That same year, the "Mother Mosque of America" was completed in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. It was begun as the Rose of Fraternity Lodge in 1925, and its supporters later erected a simple white two-story rectangular building with an iconic green dome over the front door. In its design and shape, it was akin to and drew on the models of a country schoolhouse or rural church. It was marked by a sign in English and Arabic announcing it as a space for Muslim prayer. The first floor was used extensively as a prayer space, while the second floor hosted social and cultural events.

During the Great Depression the mosque quickly fell into disuse and disrepair. Only in 1991, after it was vacated and then used as a Pentecostal church and teen center was it repurchased and renovated. In 1992, a rededication ceremony saw it open its doors again, although most Muslims attended the city's larger, more modern Islamic center, which had opened in 1992 to serve the city's 700 Muslim families from more than 30 countries. This "Mother Mosque" was listed in the National Register of Historic Buildings in 1996.

In the 1920s, after successfully bringing their missionary movement to Europe one decade earlier, Ahmadi Muslims began to proselytize in the United States, first in New York and later in Detroit and Chicago, where they established their first "mission house," which included a mosque. With limited success in converting "white Americans" to Islam,



Unique for its architectural style, this mosque in Ross, North Dakota, was used by the town's Muslim community from 1929 through the 1960s. Muslims from Ross, who traced their roots to Syria, built the mosque to withstand the harsh winters of the American Plains. (AP Images/Minot Daily News)



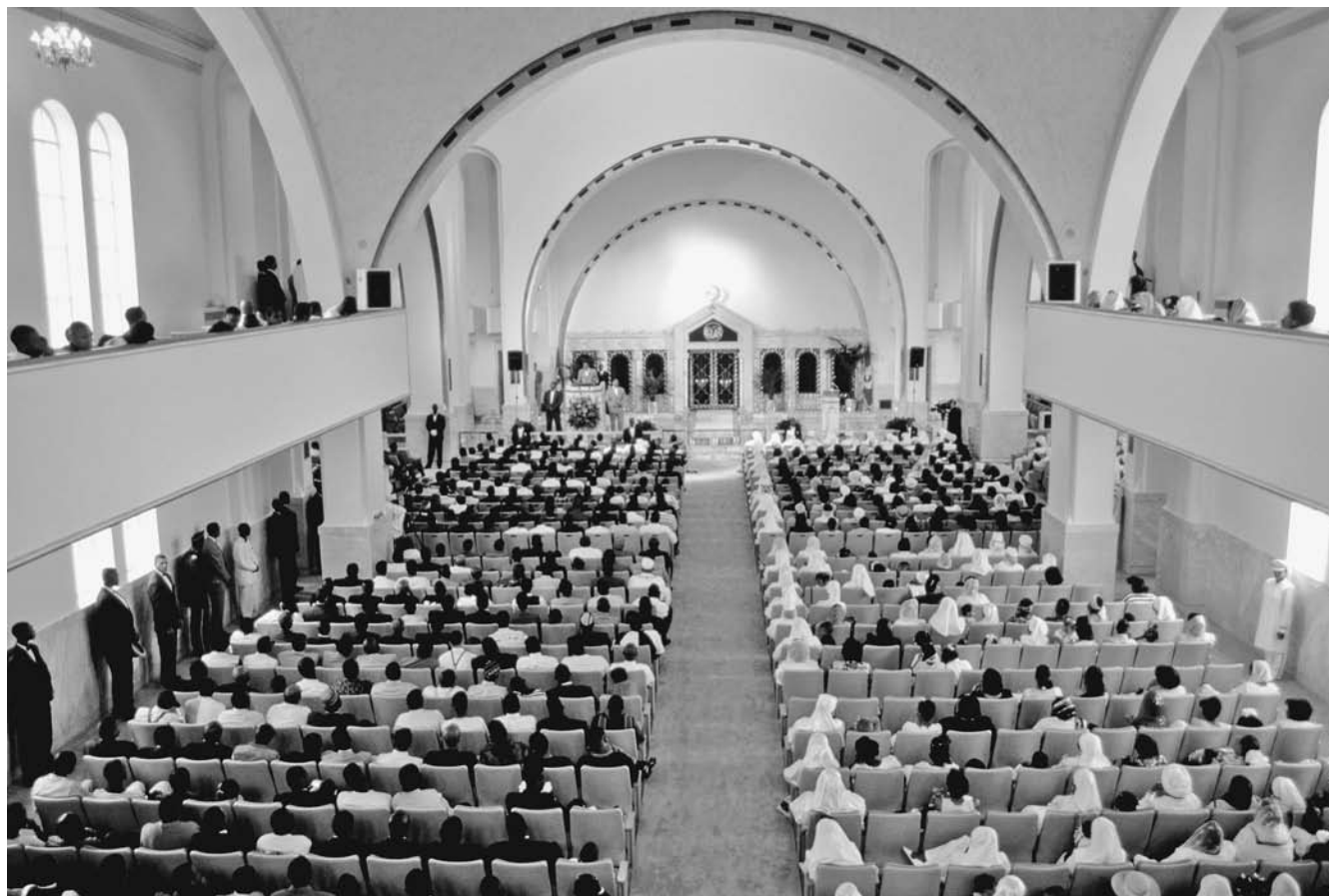
the charismatic Muhammad Sadiq, the representative of the Ahmadi movement in the United States, turned to African Americans and converted hundreds, if not thousands to Islam. He won the most converts in Detroit and CHICAGO, with lesser but notable successes in Gary, Indiana, and St. Louis, Missouri.

Supported primarily by community members in the Indian subcontinent, the Ahmadi Muslim mission set up and financed a network of “mission houses” and mosques in the United States, bringing together Muslims of various ethnicities as well as immigrants and native-born Americans. By the 1940s, the Ahmadiyya movement claimed more than 2 million adherents worldwide, of which as many as 10,000 could be found in the United States. Their primary missions and mosques were located in Chicago, CLEVELAND, Kansas City, WASHINGTON, D.C., and Pittsburgh. Though the movement declined later years, it continued its tradition of sustaining mission houses in various cities, using converted one-story houses to host its prayers and other activities.

#### 1945 TO 1965: A CHANGING SCENE

If measured by the establishment of mosques, the fastest-growing Muslim-American organization in the era immediately following WORLD WAR II was the Nation of Islam (NOI). Rather than building its own congregational spaces, however, the NOI generally rented and then often purchased converted storefronts, churches, and, for its Chicago headquarters, a former synagogue. NOI founder W. D. FARD created the first Temple of Islam in Detroit in 1930, followed quickly by Temple No. 2 in Chicago. Milwaukee and Washington, D.C., were added to the list during the 1940s. By 1973, the NOI claimed more than 70 mosques and temples—terms that were used interchangeably by thousands of members from coast to coast.

A number of activities occurred throughout the week in NOI mosques, which unlike most mosques featured benches on which members could sit. In Chicago’s Temple No. 2 in the late 1950s, Wednesday and Friday lectures started with prayers that combined verses from the Qur’an, recited in English, with blessings on NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD,



Located in Chicago, Mosque Maryam, named after the Qur’anic (and biblical) Mary, was originally a Greek Orthodox church. Purchased by Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Nation of Islam and then repurchased by Louis Farrakhan, the mosque differed from most other American mosques in that it contained pews and, later, seats. (*Daniel Laine*)



Islamic Society of North America headquarters, Plainfield, Indiana. Located next to Interstate Highway 70 and rising above corn and bean fields, the headquarters and mosque of the Islamic Society of North America was built in the early 1980s. Architect Gulzar Haider used abstract geometric patterns to express Islamic themes such as God's Oneness. (Edward E. Curtis IV)

whom members believed to be a prophet. Hands outstretched and palms facing upward—a gesture common among Muslims in prayer—members bowed their heads, closed their eyes, and recited these prayers. When finished, they passed their palms over their faces, saying Amen using the Arabic pronunciation.

But in addition to explicitly religious meetings, NOI temples and mosques hosted special events such as jazz concerts and became entrepreneurial sites in which the selling of *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, the group's newspaper, was coordinated. Perhaps most important, NOI temples and mosques were spaces for meetings of the FRUIT OF ISLAM (FOI) and the MUSLIM GIRLS TRAINING (MGT), the all-male and all-female auxiliaries of the NOI. On various nights throughout the week and during weekends, the FOI taught its members military protocol, self-defense, and hygiene in addition to conventional academic subjects such as math and English. Similarly, the MGT turned the temple and mosque into a

home economics school, teaching its members sewing, cooking, penmanship, nutrition, and hygiene, in addition to organizing all-female drill teams.

During this era, then, Muslim-American mosques became more than simply places for congregational prayers. Like Christians and Jews in this period, Muslims used their spaces for worship as community centers that often housed classes, social gatherings, fund-raisers, and dances. One could live one's waking life in and around the mosque, a practice that some Muslims subscribed to both historically and in a number of Muslim-majority countries in the contemporary world.

Unlike the modest Midwestern mosques of the 1920s and 1930s, a few Sunni Muslim mosques in this period came to emulate the architectural styles of mosques in the Middle East. Combining various styles into one building, the ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C., featured an Egyptian Mamluk edifice, Andalusian arches, and Ottoman-style glazed tiles. Supported by the many ambassadors from

various Muslim countries and designed by Italian architect Mario Rossi, the building was dedicated in 1957 by President Dwight Eisenhower and other dignitaries.

In this period, SHI'AH MUSLIM AMERICANS also erected their first purpose-built mosque. Led by Lebanese-American MOHAMAD JAWAD CHIRRI (1913–94), the Islamic Center of Detroit, later called the Islamic Center of America, opened its doors in 1963. Its appearance marked the beginning of a period of massive growth for Shi'a spaces of worship. By the first decade of the 21st century, the United States had more than 250 Shi'a mosques, *imambargahs*, and *jamaatkhanas*.

### GROWTH AFTER 1965

Following the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, over a million Muslims immigrated to the United States by the end of the 20th century. These immigrants, in tandem with African-American, white, Hispanic, Arab-American, South Asian-American, and other Muslims, changed the physical landscape of the United States by building hundreds of new mosques—more than 313 from 1980 to 2000. During this period, the architectural styles of mosques became even more varied. In addition to the converted storefronts and grand Middle Eastern-style buildings that already existed, several marquis mosques were built using modernistic designs, often improvising on geometric patterns drawn from medieval Islamic art and architecture.

Prime examples of this modernistic mosque architecture included the headquarters of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA in Plainfield, Indiana, and the Islamic Cultural Center in NEW YORK CITY, located on 96th Street and Third Avenue, which was designed by the architectural firm of Skidmore, Owing, and Merrill. Like many mosques, the Islamic Cultural Center features verses from the Qur'an as a decorative element both inside and outside the mosque. But rather than using a floral or circular font, the script of the Qur'anic verses is rendered in completely horizontal and vertical patterns. As architectural critic Akel Ismail Kahera pointed out in *Deconstructing the American Mosque* (2002), this "angular" script "produces a visual affinity" with the geometric patterns found in the dome of the mosque and in its other structures.

As the forms of mosques diversified after 1965, so did their functions. Mosques and Islamic centers offered Muslim Americans an increasing range of activities. Friday congregational prayers remained the best-attended weekly event in the mosque, but some practitioners came to prayer more often at the mosque, sometimes more than once a day. Men, women, and children often attended the Arabic and Islamic studies classes offered on the weekends and weeknights. Some Sufi mosques also featured weekly and sometimes daily sessions of *dhikr*, reciting the names of God or repeating other auspicious words, phrases, and formulas.

Study circles, support groups, and missionary committees met at mosques, and mosques also offered funeral services, washing, clothing, and praying for the body in accordance with Muslims traditions.

Acting as community centers and expanding on what earlier Muslim-American mosques had done, mosques in this period fielded teams in local youth sports competitions, coordinated fitness programs for female members, held potluck or pitch-in dinners, sponsored FOOD pantries, and set up public health clinics. If located in working-class neighborhoods plagued by crime or illegal drug use, mosques also staged rallies against substance abuse, offered drug rehabilitation services, and organized job fairs.

During this period, the organizational and leadership structures of mosques also became more diverse. As in the past, a number of mosques continued to be led by an often charismatic leader or by a central organization, as in the case of the Ahmadi missions or Nation of Islam mosques. But more and more mosques also established either boards of directors or executive committees vested with ultimate authority; in many cases, board members were elected by fellow mosque members. According to a 2001 survey, *The Mosque in America: A National Portrait*, most African-American mosques, which by and large had a small annual budget, were led by imams with final decision-making authority, while 62 percent of immigrant-dominated mosques utilized a board of directors.

Most Muslim-American mosques were led by part-time or volunteer imams. In fact, according to *The Mosque in America*, only 33 percent of all Muslim-American mosques had paid, full-time imams, and most of these were in immigrant-led mosques. The survey also found that mosques with volunteer or part-time imams were more active in formal community engagement and outreach activities than mosques with full-time, paid imams, while mosques with full-time imams were more active in offering weekend Islamic studies classes and other mosque-based activities to their congregants. This difference reflected, among other factors, the high levels of voluntarism and community involvement in predominantly African-American mosques, most of which were led by volunteer or part-time imams.

In the late 20th century, many Muslim Americans, of various political and religious persuasions, called on their communities to address the increasing demand for gender equality in the mosque. Muslim-American leaders such as INGRID MATTSON, later elected president of the Islamic Society of North America, observed that the space set aside for women in most American mosques was woefully inadequate. She also encouraged women to assume greater leadership roles in the community by joining the boards that were in charge of many mosques.

Akel Ismail Kahera pointed out that the design of many Muslim-American mosques—unlike many American



Sufi lodges or *jamaatkhanas*—relegated women to separate spaces far away from the imam, or prayer leader, and *khatib*, or sermonizer. This spatial discrimination, Kahera claimed, violated the tradition of the prophet Muhammad, whose mosque in Medina offered equal space to men and women. It also undermined the mosque's function as Muslim Americans' primary space for community making.

In the first decade of the 21st century, some Muslim-American FEMINISTS and PROGRESSIVE MUSLIMS went further, calling for women to lead mixed-gender congregational prayer as imams, rejecting the interpretation of SHARI'A, or Islamic law, that forbade women from doing so. But many, if not most Muslim Americans, like many Roman Catholics and Missouri Synod Lutherans, reiterated their belief that while women could participate in worship in many ways, they should not lead it. Some moderate Muslims, including Ingrid Mattson, warned that such an innovation would pit the Muslim-American community against the vast majority of the world's Muslims and render their activism ineffective in making positive change for Muslim women around the world.

#### AFTER 9/11

Immediately following the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, dozens of mosques and Islamic centers were either vandalized or attacked. In many instances, non-Muslim Americans attempted to help Muslim Americans protect these symbols of religious diversity in the United States. In TOLEDO, OHIO, for example, Chereffe Kadri, the president of the Islamic Center of Greater Toledo, joined hands with 2,000 community members as they surrounded and prayed for the mosque—whose stained-glass windows had been damaged by gunfire. Mosques and Islamic centers also became open houses, hosting thousands of information sessions on the Muslim faith and practice, terrorism, and Muslims in America.

Various Muslims and non-Muslims engaged in a struggle to define the meaning and functions of mosques. After the passage of the USA PATRIOT ACT in October 2001, for example, an increasing number of undercover FBI agents and police officers infiltrated mosques, viewing them as potential hotbeds of terrorism. Muslims attempted to reassure government officials and their non-Muslim neighbors that their spaces of worship were just that.

The mosque after 9/11 became more visible and vulnerable, like the Muslim-American community as a whole. There was no untangling this Muslim-American institution from the larger pressures faced by Muslim Americans in American society. But mosques and Islamic centers also offered a sense of pride and accomplishment to those who had built, renovated, and sustained what were now symbols of Muslims' abiding place in the American religious landscape.

*Edward E. Curtis IV and Rizwan Mawani*

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#### Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon, located in Fairfax County, Virginia, belonged to the Washington family from 1674 until its sale in 1858 (with its final closing in 1860), just before the Civil War, to the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, the first national preservation group in the United States. The 8,000-acre plantation is best known as the home of George Washington, commander in chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolution (1775–83), president of the Constitutional Convention (1787), and first president of the United States (1789–97). Less well known is the fact that it was also home to more than 300 enslaved African and African-American people—some of whom may have been Muslim—at the time of Washington's death in 1799.

To a great extent, the religious life of the Mount Vernon plantation mirrored its social makeup. At the top were George and Martha Washington and their family, following the formal and rather reserved pattern of 18th-century Anglicanism, which stressed the need for private devotions and service to one's church and community through work on the vestry and charitable contributions. They, in turn, supported the religious needs of their employees, who were primarily from England, Ireland, Scotland, and Germany and probably represented a wide variety of Christian denominations, by giving time off to attend church services and occasionally purchasing devotional materials for their use.

In contrast to the whites at the top and middle of the social scale, who, whether they practiced it or not, came out



of a Christian background, were the African and African-American slaves who made up roughly 90 percent of Mount Vernon's population. By 1799, most of the enslaved at Mount Vernon were second- or third-generation Americans. While at least some were involved with Christian denominations in the area, including Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, and Quakers, elements of both Islam and traditional African religions survived among Mount Vernon's enslaved population. Documentary and archaeological evidence of similar cultural survivals have been found elsewhere in Virginia, Maryland, and the Carolinas, and, according to historian Peter Kolchin, African-born slaves generally continued to practice the religions with which they had grown up, after their enslavement and transportation to the Americas. These traditions survived longest in areas where the population had a high concentration of Africans. It is clear that Washington did not care what religion was practiced by the people who worked for him. As he wrote in March 1784, when he was trying to hire skilled workmen for Mount Vernon, all he was concerned with was their work skills, not their religion: "If they are good workmen, they may be of Asia, Africa, or Europe. They may be Mahometans [Muslims], Jews, or Christians of any Sect, or they may be Atheists."

Despite Washington's supposedly tolerant outlook, there would have been challenges to anyone trying to practice a non-Christian religion, especially certain elements of Islam. The degree of supervision by an overseer or master might well have interfered with the requirement to pray five times each day. Some white persons made fun of or thought Islamic PRAYER to be evil, as was shown by the case of JOB BEN SOLOMON (1701–73), whose prayers were continually interrupted by a boy who insisted on throwing dirt on him. Despite Islamic prohibitions against both pork and alcohol, on most plantations pork formed a major part of the food provided for slaves, and alcohol was often used as a reward or was given out during times of especially hard work. Slaves were allowed to raise domestic fowls in their quarters, hunt and trap wild game at night and on their days off, and raise additional food in the garden plots designated by masters. Such efforts to procure food that followed Islamic DIETARY LAWS added to an already long workday.

Much of the evidence for the presence of Muslim slaves at Mount Vernon comes from naming practices, as well as personal histories and marriage practices. The names of at least three female slaves at Mount Vernon indicate a Muslim influence on the estate, if not the actual practice of Islam, over a period of roughly 30 years. Two women, presumably a mother and daughter, called "Fatimer" and "Little Fatimer," were included on a 1774 "titheables list," a document prepared for local authorities showing the people on his estate for whom George Washington's had to pay taxes.

These names appear to be a variation of the popular Muslim woman's name, Fatima, which in Arabic means "Shining One," and was the name of the prophet MUHAMMAD's daughter. Similarly, a young, supposedly unmarried mulatto woman named Letty, who lived at Washington's Muddy Hole Farm (one of five farms making up the Mount Vernon plantation), gave birth in 1800 to a little girl she called "Nila." This unusual name is a known variant of an Islamic woman's name, "Naailah," which means "someone who acquires something" or "someone who gets what he or she wants."

In accordance with her late husband's final wishes, Martha Washington had taken steps at the end of 1800 to free those slaves who had belonged to him, including Letty, her three children, both her parents, and all her siblings. It may be that "Nila" was an old name, remembered in Letty's family, or that of her baby's father, from Africa. Maybe she simply knew someone named Nila and wanted her daughter to carry the name of her friend. Given the timing of the girl's birth, however, it is also possible that this baby's name was bestowed in commemoration of her family's newly acquired freedom. Even if no one was actually practicing Islam, this child's name provides evidence that some knowledge of Islamic tradition or a familiarity with the Arabic language could still be found in the larger African-American community in Fairfax County or Alexandria, if not at Mount Vernon itself, at the beginning of the 19th century.

The documented history of an African-born carpenter at Mount Vernon, known as Sambo Anderson, suggests that he was a practicing Muslim. Even today, the name Sambou is very common in West Africa, where people are often named for either the day of the week on which they were born or for their birth order within their family. Sambou is a name used primarily for a second son among the Hausa people of what is now northwestern Nigeria and southern Niger, although it can also be found among other ethnic groups in this part of Africa. Sambo Anderson was described as having mahogany-colored skin, with high cheekbones and a stout build. His face was marked by both tribal cuts and tattooing, and he wore gold rings in both ears. Sambo told several people that he was of royal birth and that his father was a king.

It is not clear exactly when Sambo came to Mount Vernon, but plantation records indicate that he was a boy in 1776 and only about 20 years old in 1781. Once there, he was trained as a carpenter by William Bernard Sears, an English-born craftsman who originally came to Virginia as a young indentured convict in 1752. Sambo was one of 17 slaves—14 men and three women—who voluntarily left Mount Vernon in April 1781 during the American Revolution (1775–83), when the British warship *Savage* anchored in the Potomac River and the enemy was furnished with provisions from the estate. George Washington was understandably upset when he learned of this incident, noting in a letter to the cousin

who was managing the estate that he would have preferred that his home be burned and the estate ransacked, rather than providing assistance to the enemy. A little less than half of this group of 17 slaves was eventually returned to Washington's estate. Sambo got as far as Philadelphia before he was recovered, along with four of the other men from Mount Vernon.

Sambo was likely Muslim. The ethnic group from which he most likely came, the Hausa, bore a strong Islamic influence, which had come to them from Mali, beginning in the late 14th century. Evidence about Sambo's family life strengthens the notion that he, and very likely others, had not given up Islam when he came to America.

According to Washington's 1799 slave list, Sambo was married to a 36-year-old woman named Agnes, with whom he had three children, ranging in age from 17 to 11. Also on that list were three other children, Ralph (9), Charity (2), and Charles (1), whose mother, Sall, had died not long before. Sambo was among the slaves freed by the terms of Washington's will; however, Agnes, her children, and Sall's children, as "dower slaves" who belonged to the estate of Martha Washington's first husband, could not be freed and were eventually divided among the latter's four grandchildren.

Eleven years later, in summer 1810, a local newspaper alerted its subscribers to the escape of a young man named Ralph, then about 21 years old, from his owner, who was the husband of Martha Washington's second granddaughter. Ralph was believed to be heading for the home of his father, who was described as a freeman by the name of Sambo, living at Mount Vernon. It is possible that Sambo had two wives, both Agnes and Sall, a fact George Washington might not have recognized because it was outside the scope of his experience and cultural expectations.

Polygamy, while probably not common among Virginia slaves, was not completely unknown either. At least one African-born slave on a plantation belonging to Robert Carter had two wives. Besides polygamy, however, there may be other explanations for Sambo's family situation, including an extramarital relationship between Sambo and Sall, or the informal adoption of Sall's children by Sambo and Agnes. It is impossible to do more than speculate, but the possibility that Sambo may have been practicing the marriage pattern he knew as a child in Africa is certainly intriguing and should not be overlooked. Either Islam, which permitted up to four wives, or a more traditional African religion, some of which allowed hundreds and even thousands of wives for those who could afford them, would have given him both a tradition of and clear conscience to practice polygamy. Given the likelihood that Sambo was a Hausa, most of whom were Muslim, his polygamy, if any, was probably a reflection of an Islamic background.

Sambo was one of 123 slaves freed by the terms of George Washington's will on January 1, 1801. As a free man, he took the last name Anderson, perhaps a reflection of positive feelings toward Washington's Scottish farm manager, James Anderson, or his son John. Sambo made his home on Little Hunting Creek near Mount Vernon and supported himself by hunting game and wildfowl, which he sold to private customers and hotels in Alexandria. With the money he earned, he is said to have purchased two slaves himself. County records show that Sambo emancipated two slaves, but at least one is known to have been his son, William Anderson, born about 1812, while the other, a young woman named Eliza Anderson, who was six years younger, was probably his daughter. Sambo and his son William were among 12 former Washington slaves and their descendants who voluntarily returned to the estate in 1835 to work on George Washington's tomb, offering their services as a way of honoring the man who had freed them from slavery.

Given recent research by historians documenting the practice of Islam by enslaved people throughout North America, the idea that there may have been Muslim slaves at Mount Vernon should come as no surprise. Although definitive evidence is lacking, the likely presence of Muslims at this most prominent 18th-century plantation reminds us that America was built by people with a variety of faiths. In considering the practice of religion at Mount Vernon, one is struck by the thought that when George Washington spoke of the need for religious toleration and freedom, when he wrote in May 1789 of his belief that "every man, conducting himself as a good citizen" was "accountable to God alone for his religious opinions" and should "be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience," perhaps he was extrapolating from the situation at his own home to the country at large.

Mary V. Thompson

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**Muhammad Ali v. United States** See CLAY, AKA ALI V. UNITED STATES.

### **Muhammad, Clara (1899–1972) matriarch of the Nation of Islam**

Clara Belle Evans Muhammad was matriarch of the original NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) and, as wife of NOI leader Elijah Muhammad, one of the group’s most influential women. Clara Muhammad was born in Wenona, Georgia, in 1899 (the exact date is unknown) to farmer Quartus Evans and his wife Mary Lue Thomas. She attended school up to the eighth grade in Cordele, Georgia.

In 1919, Muhammad married Elijah Poole, who would later change his last name to Muhammad. To escape the perils of Southern racism, they moved to DETROIT in 1923, where Clara found work as a maid in white homes. Her husband worked in various industrial jobs but was unable to remain steadily employed and increasingly drank to excess. Clara and their children, who ultimately numbered eight, continually lived at the poverty level.

During the 1920s, the couple became interested in Islam and were sporadically involved with the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America. In spring 1931, Clara heard a talk by W. D. FARD, a Muslim gaining local recognition as a religious speaker. Inspired, she became convinced that Fard was a prophet. Clara invited Fard to dinner at the Poole home so that she could introduce her husband to his teachings.

After the introduction, the Pooles’ family life was reoriented by Fard’s guidance. Elijah believed Fard to be not only a prophet but God himself. He was taught to preach, and in 1933, Fard rewarded him with the new surname Muhammad. Their small group of followers was renamed the Nation of Islam. Fard disappeared the following year, and Elijah Muhammad assumed the leadership role. Clara believed her husband had been chosen as the Messenger of Allah, and she supported his leadership. Her 1972 obituary in *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, the NOI newspaper, said that she “recreated the very definitions of devotion and righteousness, [and] submission,”

adding that she had “manifested a new path for the Black woman.”

One of Clara Muhammad’s most important roles in the NOI came during the period from 1942 to 1946, when her husband was imprisoned for violating the Selective Service Act. Clara Muhammad became the supreme secretary of the NOI in his absence. Through regular prison visits, she delivered Elijah’s instructions to ministers and offered her own guidance about completion of their tasks. Although the NOI membership shrank considerably during this time, if not for her dedication the movement might have disintegrated completely.

Clara and Elijah experienced domestic trouble over the years, especially in the early 1960s when she discovered the births of several of his illegitimate children. The FBI had leaked information about his extramarital affairs, apparently hoping that a shadow on Elijah Muhammad’s character would cause both divorce and the tarnishing of his reputation. While his activities did not cause excessive discord within the NOI, they did cause distress and depression for Clara. She left Elijah for months at a time, but their troubles were kept relatively private within the organization.

Clara Muhammad died on August 12, 1972, from stomach cancer. Her husband died in 1975 and left the leadership of the NOI to one of their sons, W. D. MOHAMMED. The legacy of her interest in children’s education is preserved in the Clara Muhammad Schools, a national system of ISLAMIC SCHOOLS named in her honor. Originally called the University of Islam, these schools began as a parochial school for NOI members’ and other African-American children in 1932. Clara Muhammad was among the first to remove her children from public schools and enroll them in the new program, thus setting the example for other NOI families. By the 21st century, the accredited school system, located in dozens of North American cities, included elementary and secondary schools as well as weekend programs.

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### **Muhammad, Elijah (Elijah Mohammed, Elijah Poole) (1897–1975) leader of the Nation of Islam, 1934–1975**

For four decades, Elijah Muhammad led the NATION OF ISLAM, the largest, most recognizable, and most influential Muslim organization in the United States. To his followers,

he became known as the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, Messenger of Allah. When he began his ministry in the mid-1930s, there were perhaps a few thousand African-American Muslims in the United States. By the time of his death in 1975, there were a few hundred thousand. Through the efforts of followers such as MALCOLM X, LOUIS FARRAKHAN, and his son W. D. MOHAMMED, he is indirectly responsible for the million-plus African Americans who call themselves Muslim. Even though these three other Muslim leaders eventually attained greater fame than he did and two of them rejected his formulation of Islam, it was Elijah Muhammad who brought each of them to Islam.

There would be no doubt that Elijah Muhammad was the most influential African-American Muslim, or even the most influential American Muslim, were it not for the question of whether he actually was a Muslim. On the one hand, his personal commitment to Allah and his emphasis on the Qur'an seem to place him clearly within the religion of Islam. On the other hand, Muhammad claimed that his mentor W. D. FARD was "Allah in person," that he was Allah's apostle, that the white man is the devil, and that heaven and hell are states of mind on earth rather than a place to which one goes after death. These teachings seem to contradict some of the basic teachings of Islam as traditionally understood, and so many Muslims outside the Nation of Islam vehemently objected to the description of Muhammad as a "Muslim" and his religion as "Islam."

#### THE LIFE OF ELIJAH MUHAMMAD

Elijah Muhammad was born Elijah Poole in Sandersville, Georgia, in October 1897—the exact date is unknown since Georgia did not keep birth records for black people. His father and grandfather were untrained Baptist preachers. From an early age he was given to Bible study, and it was assumed that he would follow their footsteps and become a Christian preacher. He questioned Christian doctrine, however, especially in light of the virulent white racism in the South in the early 20th century. He even witnessed two lynchings and later said that Christians, black or white, had done little to stop them. These experiences were evidence to him that Christianity, as practiced in America, was antiblack.

In 1919, he married Clara Evans and eventually had eight children: Emmanuel, Ethel, Lottie, Nathaniel, Herbert, Elijah, Jr., Wallace, and Akbar. His first contact with Islam occurred well after he migrated to Detroit in 1923 with his wife and family. In Detroit, according to an interview that Muhammad gave to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 1942, he worked at the American Nut Company, the American Copper and Brass Company, and finally as an auto worker for Chevrolet Axle. When the GREAT DEPRESSION began in 1929, he lost his job.

In 1931, he met W. D. Fard (also known as Wali Fard Muhammad), a preacher who taught that the "so-called Negroes" were originally part of the Asiatic race and the religion of Islam. Freedom and justice, said Fard, required abandoning Christianity—the religion of the "white devil"—and returning to their religion, Islam. Fard also taught that the present world would be consumed in an apocalyptic battle between Christianity and Islam. In addition, Fard told his followers to avoid pork and alcohol, both of which were traditional Islamic teachings. Such lessons had a profound effect on Elijah Muhammad. Even before Fard gave him permission to preach this message, he began transmitting what he had learned from Fard to others, often sharing his own reading of the Bible to support Fard's Islamic teachings; it was he who first called Fard Muhammad a prophet and later came to believe that Fard was God or Allah in person. He eventually became Fard's chief minister, and sometime from 1931 to 1934, Fard gave Elijah Poole two new surnames to replace his "slave name" that he had been given by a former slave owner. The first was Karriem. The second was Muhammad, the name he used for the rest of his life.

In 1933, Fard was arrested by the police in Detroit on the suspicion that he had ordered a man to kill someone in a ritual sacrifice. Robert Harris, the killer who said he was acting on Fard's orders, was committed to a hospital for the mentally insane and the charges were dropped. But the police still ordered Fard to leave Detroit, and he complied. He moved to Chicago, where Elijah Muhammad saw him for the last time in 1934. According to the Nation of Islam's official history, Fard gave him two copies of the Qur'an and a list of 104 books to read. Elijah Muhammad returned to Detroit, and Fard then mysteriously disappeared.

A power struggle erupted within the movement. Harassed by the police and, according to Muhammad, threatened by rivals, he escaped to Chicago. There, one of his own brothers challenged his authority, and in 1935, Muhammad fled again. Of the estimated 5,000 to 8,000 followers of Fard, fewer than 200 gave their allegiance to his chief minister. Elijah Muhammad spent the next seven years proselytizing in East Coast cities with significant African-American populations.

As WORLD WAR II approached, the FBI came to suspect that Muhammad was preaching a revolutionary, antiracist message and that some sort of alliance might form between the empire of Japan and African Americans. In 1942, he was arrested and accused of sedition. Although acquitted of this charge, he was convicted of failing to register for the military draft and sentenced to one to five years in prison. From 1943 to 1946, Muhammad was incarcerated in a federal correctional institution in Milan, Michigan, but remained in contact with his followers through his wife, Clara. By the time of his release, he had only 1,000 followers in four temples, but



his sense of mission was strengthened and his rivals had all but disappeared. During his imprisonment, he also saw that no one was seeking to reform African-American prisoners. His decision to give attention to this group brought to his movement its most charismatic spokesmen and missionary, Malcolm Little, who was incarcerated in Massachusetts from 1946 to 1952.

From 1952 to 1963, with the help of Malcolm Little, who had changed his name to Malcolm X, Muhammad oversaw the growth of the Nation of Islam from approximately 10 to 50 temples or mosques. The movement attracted national and even international attention and was famously criticized in 1959 by CBS reporter Mike Wallace as the “hate that hate produced.” In 1961, the movement remained in the spotlight as African-American sociologist of religion C. Eric Lincoln published the first major academic study of the movement, *The Black Muslims in America*. It was a label that stuck, and for decades afterward, Americans would still refer to members of the Nation of Islam as “Black Muslims.”

In 1963, the partnership between Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X, often the cause of jealousy among other movement leaders, unraveled. That year, when allegations emerged that Muhammad had fathered several children with mistresses, Malcolm X first sought to mitigate the damage by devising explanations and discussing them with other ministers. But Muhammad came to believe that Malcolm was spreading rumors, and he and Malcolm’s rivals sought to curtail his influence and public appearances. When President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963 and Muhammad ordered his followers to make no comment, Malcolm broke Elijah’s commandment, saying Kennedy’s violent death was an example of America’s “chickens coming home to roost.” Muhammad ordered him to be silent for 90 days as punishment, but Malcolm soon declared that members of the Nation of Islam were plotting against his life.

Malcolm X left the Nation of Islam and rapidly moved to a more SUNNI, or what he called a more “orthodox,” formulation of Islam. His subsequent criticism of the Nation of Islam greatly angered Elijah Muhammad and others in the movement. In February 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated by several gunmen alleged to be part of the Nation of Islam. Muhammad seems to have had no involvement in the assassination, but it has been argued that he inadvertently set the stage by attacking Malcolm as the “chief hypocrite” and a “traitor.”

Malcolm X was not Elijah Muhammad’s sole difficulty. His sons Akbar Muhammad and Wallace D. Muhammad (later known as W. D. Mohammed) also broke with their father over his teachings, which they believed did not accord with those of the Qur’an and Sunni Islam. Akbar was declared a heretic, but Wallace was readmitted into the Nation after Malcolm X’s assassination.

Despite these difficulties, the final decade of Elijah Muhammad’s life was characterized by continued growth of his movement. As the number of mosques increased, so did Muhammad’s personal wealth. In addition to buying a small bank, he owned a multimillion-dollar fish import business, grocery stores, farms, a newspaper, and other small businesses. By the time of his death in 1975, some estimated his estate to be worth more than \$60 million, while other observers noted that there were massive debts against his significant assets. More important to the growth of the Nation of Islam, many of these businesses provided both employment opportunities and a sense of pride to movement members who worked in them.

This period saw the rise of Louis Farrakhan, a Nation of Islam minister who assumed the title of National Spokesman for the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. In the early 1970s, rivalries within the Nation of Islam and with rival Muslim organizations again brought turmoil to the movement. As Muhammad neared the end of his life, he never explicitly named a successor, thinking it unnecessary. Others, including Farrakhan and Muhammad’s son W. D. Mohammed, began maneuvering to succeed him. When Elijah Muhammad died on February 25, 1975, just one day before the annual Savior Day’s rally in Chicago, his son W. D. Mohammed prevailed and was proclaimed the new supreme minister. Almost immediately, W. D. Mohammed began the process of transforming his father’s Nation of Islam into a far more Sunni Muslim movement.

#### ELIJAH MUHAMMAD’S FORMULATION OF ISLAM

Elijah Muhammad and his followers considered themselves to be Muslims who practiced the correct form of Islam, and many of his teachings and the practices of his followers were easily identifiable as Islamic. He taught the belief that God was One, that God had sent prophets such as Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad to humankind, that the Qur’an was the word of God, and that there would be rewards and punishment on Judgment Day. Some of his followers prayed five times a day, fasted, and abstained from pork and alcohol. In sum, many basic beliefs and practices of Sunni and Shi’a Islam were advocated by Elijah Muhammad.

And yet each of these beliefs and practices had a racial (and, for most Muslims, an unorthodox) component. Instead of one god who was wholly different from his creation, Muhammad taught that Allah was a black man, the most recent of whom was W. D. Fard, his minister in the 1930s. Such a belief violated the strong prohibition in Islamic history against associating anything or anyone with Allah. Moreover, Muhammad taught that a mad, evil scientist named Yakub had bred the “devil white race” out of the original black humanity 6,600 years ago and that these devils—that is, whites—would be killed in a Day of Judgment in which black greatness would be restored to the earth.

In Elijah Muhammad's Islamic teachings, the historical role of Moses, Jesus, and even Muhammad were largely confined to their largely futile efforts to reform or confine the white race. Muhammad's tendency to read references in the Qur'an to "Allah" and the "messenger of Allah" as references to both W. D. Fard and himself were also problematic. Likewise, Muhammad's denial of a bodily resurrection on the Last Day as taught by most other formulations of Islam and his description of Heaven and Hell as contemporary situations and resurrection as a mental condition were all novel interpretations. Muhammad also understood and practiced Islamic rituals differently from other Muslims. For example, he advocated fasting, not during the month of Ramadan in commemoration of the initial revelation of the Qur'an to Muhammad, but in December to focus his followers' minds on W. D. Fard instead of Christmas.

Similarly troubling for some Muslims was Elijah Muhammad's tendency to focus on racial conflict in the United States, especially when he portrayed his racial political and economic policies as inseparable from Islam. Many of Elijah Muhammad's contemporary Muslim rivals also focused on racial issues. They argued that Islam taught the equality of all humankind, however, regardless of race. Muhammad's efforts toward economic independence from white America and demands for territorial separation within the continental United States for African Americans were not only no less important than teaching prayer, but also he claimed that this was for him what Islam taught. That is to say, Muhammad insisted that Islam was the original religion of black humanity (which he thought, at least at first, comprised all nonwhites). The primary context of the Qur'an was not seventh-century Arabia (where Islam first emerged), but 20th-century America. Therefore, he interpreted historical references in the Qur'an as prophecies. For instance, passages about "hypocrites" in the Qur'an were interpreted to be prophecies against opponents such as Malcolm X, and the many passages about the Last Day were interpreted to be prophecies about the coming "Fall of America."

#### ELIJAH MUHAMMAD AND OTHER MUSLIMS

From the late 1950s onward, Elijah Muhammad experienced increasing hostility from other Muslims. Many of them, not surprisingly, charged him with not being a "real" Muslim. They focused on the novel beliefs and practices of the Nation of Islam. Initially, these Muslims were African-American converts to Sunni Islam whose own movements were in direct competition with the Nation of Islam or were Muslim immigrants from the Middle East. They even objected to Muhammad's use of the words "Muslim" and "Islam." Later, Muhammad had to contend with former followers, most notably Malcolm X and his own sons.

Elijah Muhammad's earliest comments on Arab Muslims sought to minimize differences. At the same time, he tried to adopt some orthodox practices and went on pilgrimage to Mecca to demonstrate his Islamic credentials. Ironically, his travels within the Muslim world also disabused him of his utopian image of other Muslims that he had had and made the later break with them easier. Initially, however, he criticized them mainly for continuing to try to convert whites to Islam—a task he thought to be completely pointless. Thus, he considered "Eastern Muslims" merely conservative or confused. After being criticized by these Muslims, he increasingly came to believe that Muslims from the East had been corrupted and were, in fact, hypocrites. In the early 1970s, he used even stronger language, criticizing "old-world" Muslims for following an "old Islam led by Whites" and claiming that they were no better than white Christians. It is noteworthy that Muhammad abandoned these other Muslims, but he never abandoned Islam. In fact, the centrality of Islam in his personal life and to his movement is demonstrated by his taking criticism from other Muslims so seriously.

Of course, Muhammad's claim to be Muslim and his authority to lead his Muslim followers was never based on being accepted by "orthodox" Muslims. For him, his authority came directly from Allah himself. Muhammad believed that Allah in the person of W. D. Fard had appointed him. For more than three years in the early 1930s, he had been trained personally by Fard. Then, for the remainder of his life, Muhammad claimed that Allah continued to speak to him at least once a year. Scripture, both the Bible and the Qur'an, also confirmed for him everything he had been taught about Islam and the black and white races.

#### CONCLUSION

The autonomous black state and the racial separation that Elijah Muhammad had long advocated never occurred, and his enormous business empire was quickly dismantled after his death in 1975. His son W. D. Mohammed changed the beliefs, practices, and even the name of his father's movement in 1976 from the Nation of Islam to the World Community of al-Islam in the West. By the 1990s, W. D. Mohammed argued that the move of the Nation of Islam to Sunni Islam had always been part of W. D. Fard's plan. First he had to free the minds of African Americans, and then they would be ready to embrace Islam. W. D. Mohammed believed his father died an orthodox Sunni Muslim.

Elijah Muhammad's importance to "orthodox" Islam in America need not depend on this type of revisionist history, however. First, despite being considered a heretic by many other Muslims, he accomplished what no other Muslim had done: directly and indirectly Elijah Muhammad brought thousands of African Americans to Islam, and this made him the most successful Muslim missionary in American history.

Second, Muhammad's use of the Qur'an to justify his own teachings not only gave an advantage to his Sunni opponents who were far more familiar with the text but also eventually affected key figures within the Nation of Islam, most notably his own sons and his first protégé, Malcolm X. Thus, Elijah Muhammad's own profound attachment to Islam and its scripture made the eventual move to some form of orthodoxy, while unpremeditated, much more likely.

Elijah Muhammad's historical legacy also extends beyond Muslim America. His radical criticism of the United States and Christianity as inherently racist and his calls for racial separatism made civil rights activists such as Martin Luther King, Jr., look politically moderate by comparison. Muhammad's successful building of a national religious movement marked as much by business activity as by prayer was a source of pride to many African Americans, whether they agreed with his Islamic teachings or not. Upon his death, the *New York Times* remarked on its editorial pages that Muhammad had improved the lives of African Americans who had been largely abandoned. Few figures have had a greater impact on Muslim-American history than Elijah Muhammad.

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### Elijah Muhammad “What the Muslims Want” and “What the Muslims Believe” (1965)

*Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975), longtime leader of the Nation of Islam, won over thousands of African-American converts with teach-*

*ings that responded to the social, religious, political, and economic hopes and needs of black Americans after World War II. These teachings appeared each week on the back page of Muhammad Speaks, one of the most popular black national newspapers of the 1960s and early 1970s. “What the Muslims Want” and “What the Muslims Believe” presented the simplified version of Elijah Muhammad’s doctrines about the beginning and end of the world, as well as his formula for black political and economic power. Men wearing bow ties and dark suits sold Muhammad Speaks door-to-door and on the streets of urban black America—using the sale of the newspaper as a chance to promote Muhammad’s message as well. That message contained religious doctrines that combined Sunni Islamic beliefs with Muhammad’s unique prophecies and mythological teachings. It also embodied hopes for freedom, equality, and economic success that had been central to African-American culture since the 19th century.*



### What the Muslims Want

1. We want freedom. We want a full and complete freedom.
2. We want justice. Equal justice under the law. We want justice applied equally to all, regardless of creed, or class, or color.
3. We want equality of opportunity. We want equal membership in society with the best in civilized society.
4. We want our people in America whose parents or grandparents were descendants from slaves, to be allowed to establish a separate state or territory of their own . . . either on this continent or elsewhere. We believe that our former slave masters are obliged to provide such land and that the area must be fertile and minerally rich. We believe that our former slave masters are obligated to maintain and supply our needs in this separate territory for the next 20 to 25 years . . . until we are able to produce our own needs.  
 Since we cannot get along with them in peace and equality, after giving them 400 years of our sweat and blood, and receiving in return some of the worst treatment human beings have ever experienced, we believe our contributions to this land and the suffering forced upon us by white America, justifies our demand for complete separation in a state or territory of our own.
5. We want freedom for all Believers of Islam now held in federal prisons. We want freedom for all black men and women now under death sentence in innumerable prisons in the North, as well as the South.

We want every black man and woman to have the freedom to accept or reject being separated from the slave-masters' children and establish a land of their own.

We know that the above plan for the solution of the black and white conflict is the best and only answer to the problem between two people.

6. We want an immediate end to the police brutality and mob attacks against the so-called Negro throughout the United States.

We believe that the Federal government should intercede to see that black men and women tried in white courts receive justice in accordance with the laws of the land, or allow us to build a new nation for ourselves, dedicated to justice, freedom and liberty.

7. As long as we are not allowed to establish a state or territory of our own, we demand not only equal justice under the laws of the United States, but equal employment opportunities—NOW!

We do not believe that after 400 years of free or nearly free labor, sweat and blood, which has helped America become rich and powerful, that so many thousands of black people should have to subsist on relief or charity or live in poor houses.

8. We want the government of the United States to exempt our people from ALL taxation as long as we are deprived of equal justice under the laws of the land.

9. We want equal education—but separate schools up to 16 for boys and 18 for girls on the condition that the girls be sent to women's colleges and universities. We want all black children, educated, taught and trained by their own teachers.

Under such schooling systems we believe we will make a better nation of people. The United States government should provide, free, all necessary text books and equipment, schools, and college buildings. The Muslim teachers shall be left free to teach and train their people in the way of righteousness, decency and self respect.

10. We believe that intermarriage or race mixing should be prohibited. We want the religion of Islam taught without hindrance or suppression.

These are some of the things that we, the Muslims, want for our people in North America.

### **What the Muslims Believe**

1. We believe in the One God Whose proper Name is Allah.

2. We believe in the Holy Qur-an and in the Scriptures of all the Prophets of God.

3. We believe in the truth of the Bible, but we believe that it has been tampered with and must be reinterpreted so that mankind will not be snared by the falsehoods that have been added to it.

4. We believe in Allah's Prophets and the Scriptures they brought to the people.

5. We believe in the resurrection of the dead—not in the physical resurrection but in mental resurrection. We believe that the so-called Negroes are most in need of mental resurrection; therefore, they will be resurrected first.

Furthermore, we believe we are the people of God's choice, as it has been written that God would choose the rejected and the despised. We can find no other persons fitting this description in these last days more than the so-called Negroes in America. We believe in the resurrection of the righteous.

6. We believe in the judgment. We believe this first judgment will take place in America.

7. We believe this is the time in history for the separation of the so-called Negroes and so-called white Americans. We believe the black men should be freed in name as well as in fact. By this we mean that he should be freed from the names imposed upon him by his former slave-masters. Names which identified him as being the slave of a slave-master. We believe that if we are free indeed, we should go in our own people's names—the black people of the earth.

8. We believe in justice for all whether in God or not. We believe as others that we are due equal justice as human beings. We believe in equality—as a nation—of equals. We do not believe that we are equal with our slave master in the status of "Freed slaves."

We recognize and respect American citizens as independent people and we respect their laws which govern this nation.

9. We believe that the offer of integration is hypocritical and is made by those who are trying to deceive the black people into believing that their 400-year-old open enemies of freedom, justice and equality are, all of a sudden, their "friends." Furthermore, we believe that such deception is intended to prevent black people from realizing that the time in history has arrived for the separation from the whites of this nation.

If the white people are truthful about their professed friendship toward the so-called Negro,



they can prove it by dividing up America with their slaves.

We do not believe that America will ever be able to furnish jobs for her own millions of unemployed, in addition to jobs for the 20,000,000 black people as well.

10. We believe that we who declared ourselves to be righteous Muslims should not participate in wars which take the lives of humans. We do not believe this nation should force us to take part in such wars, for we have nothing to gain from it unless America agrees to give us the necessary territory wherein we may have something to fight for.

11. We believe our women should be respected and protected as the women of their nationalities are respected and protected.

12. We believe that Allah (God) appeared in the Person of Master Fard Muhammad, July, 1930—the long-awaited “Messiah” of the Christians and the “Mahdi” of the Muslims.

We believe further and lastly that Allah is God and besides HIM there is no God and He will bring about a universal government of peace wherein we all can live in peace together.



Source: Muhammad, Elijah. “What the Muslims Want” and “What the Muslims Believe.” In *Message to the Blackman in America*, 161–164. Chicago: Mohammed’s Temple of Islam, 1965.

## Muhammad, Prophet of Islam

The earliest Muslim Americans to speak about the prophet Muhammad (570–632), the central figure in the rise of Islam, were likely slaves from West Africa. Some, such as ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (1762–1829), who was captured and enslaved in Mississippi, were graduates of leading Muslim academies in Africa. These slaves often had training in SHARI‘A, a Muslim code of law and ethics, in addition to detailed knowledge of the QUR’AN and of the life of Muhammad. Some of them prayed five times a day, invoking peace and blessings on “Muhammad, his descendants and followers.” YARROW MAMOUT (ca. 1736–1823) was said to do so on the streets of Washington, D.C. Some slaves were familiar with the pious account of Muhammad’s life from the earliest *sira*, or biographies of the Prophet, as well as from the hadith literature, the sayings and deeds of Muhammad and his companions. At the time, very little of this literature was known in the West.

When Muslims first came to America, most English-language books on Islam and on Muhammad were written from a polemical perspective, ridiculing Muhammad as a false prophet, a womanizer who composed the Qur’an to justify his and his followers’ polygamy and the use of the sword. This view of Muhammad stands in sharp contrast with how slaves saw him. For them, Muhammad was God’s prophet, the last in a line of prophets that began with Adam, who was followed by Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. They revered all these prophets, uttering “peace be upon them” after mentioning their names. Like all prophets, Muhammad committed no major sin. In their view, he did not compose the Qur’an but received this through the Angel Gabriel from God in a series of revelatory experiences.

In the midst of the stereotypes about the prophet Muhammad popular in 19th-century America, Muslim-American convert ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB (1846–1916) attempted in his book *Islam in America* (1893) to correct what he regarded as common falsehoods about Muhammad. He refuted some “popular errors,” claiming that no existing book on Muhammad in English represented a true account. According to Webb, Christians had “persistently . . . misrepresented and misunderstood Muhammad,” calling Islam “the religion of the sword.” Webb challenged that view by arguing that both Muhammad and the first caliph, Abu Bakr, laid down humane rules of military engagement insisting on “mercy and kindness.” Muhammad was generous and forgiving when Mecca surrendered in the seventh century, Webb wrote, and not a single home was plundered. In addition, he said, Muhammad condemned the use of the sword to proselytize, as well as to commit “violence and [the] taking of life in any form.”

In Webb’s view, Muhammad fought only defensive wars and, “above all” else, wanted peace. Though given permission by God to fight because Muslims had been attacked and driven from their homes, Webb declared, Muhammad was tolerant of other religions. On slavery, Muhammad and the Qur’an encouraged emancipation and took several steps to “abolish future slavery,” he wrote. In addition, on a chapter about “Polygamy and Purdah [gender segregation],” Webb argued that neither of these was truly Islamic but that the former paled in moral significance compared with marital infidelity and prostitution common in the West. He did not discuss Muhammad’s marriages. In summary, Webb wrote, Muhammad taught “nothing new” but revived the “one eternal truth which has been preserved” for humankind from the beginning of the world. Like Jesus, he never claimed to be God or the Son of God. In fact, according to Webb’s reading of Islamic tradition, Jesus prophesied Muhammad’s coming. The true teachings of Jesus and Muhammad are identical, he concluded, yet Christians describe Muhammad as an imposter.

When Ahmadi missionaries came to the United States in 1921, they were anxious to defend Muhammad from misunderstanding and criticism. Speaking in a Chicago church to a large gathering sometime after 1928, Sufi missionary M. R. Bengalee outlined what Muhammad's message would be to the people of Chicago. According to Bengalee, Muhammad would ask them to pray to the one God and to respect all prophets including Krishna, Buddha, and Jesus, as well as the Ahmadi prophet, Ghulam Ahmed. Muhammad would ask them to be true democrats, to open their doors to people of all colors and races, to give generously to the needy, and to pray several times a day. Muhammad would ask them to forgo drinking alcohol. He would enthusiastically support prohibition. He would invite people to find happiness in serving God and humanity.

For members of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), founded by W. D. FARD in 1930, the prophet Muhammad was the messenger to whom God had revealed the Qur'an, and Muhammad's religion was the same as that of Jesus and of all the prophets. Muhammad succeeded in setting "darkness back 1,000 years" until the white race reached America and enslaved Africans. At the same time, members of the NOI did not regard Muhammad as the final prophet of God. The Muhammad of 1,400 years ago was not the "prophet like unto Moses" (Deuteronomy 18:18), they thought; that prophet was ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, who led the NOI from the 1930s until his death in 1975. Some NOI members have suggested that Elijah Muhammad performed more impressively than "the Muhammad of 1,400 years ago" because he revived a forgotten and lost nation. When NOI members recited the Islamic profession of faith, "There is no god but God; Muhammad is the Messenger of God," most were referring to W. D. Fard, who was believed to be God, and Elijah Muhammad, who was God's messenger.

Sheikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal (1891–1980), the leader of the State Street mosque in Brooklyn, New York, challenged that view. In 1950, he argued that Muhammad of Arabia was the final messenger of God, countering claims by Muslim-American prophets Noble Drew Ali and Elijah Muhammad, as well as the arguments of the Ahmadis. He also stressed that the prophet Muhammad did not preach a new message but taught exactly what Abraham, Moses, and Jesus had preached—all of whom were Muslim, he said. Through Muhammad, the religion of all humanity had spread across the world, said Faisal; Muhammad's mission was to establish global harmony.

When W. D. MOHAMMED led the majority of NOI members into Sunni Islam after Elijah Muhammad's death in 1975, the pious account of Muhammad's life replaced the version taught by his father. The simultaneous growth of Sunni Muslim communities not associated with W. D. Mohammed's leadership in the 1960s and 1970s led to a consolidation

of Sunni views of Muhammad among African-American Muslims. Often joining with other Muslim Americans, most African-American Muslims identified the life example of the prophet Muhammad as a primary source of their religious values.

By the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st, Muslim Americans often united to respond to specific criticisms of Muhammad that emanated from conservative critics of Islam. When Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini approved the killing of author Salman Rushdie for making derogatory comments about Muhammad in his 1988 novel, *The Satanic Verses*, Muslim Americans gained several allies, including former President Jimmy Carter, in their rejection of the call for Rushdie's death and their condemnation of the stereotypical depictions of Muhammad.

After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, criticisms of Muhammad as intolerant, deceitful, and violent only increased. For example, anti-Muslim critic Robert Spencer's *The Truth about Muhammad: Founder of the World's Most Intolerant Religion* (2006), stated that Muhammad ordered the murder of critics, especially of poets. The COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR) and numerous other Muslim-American groups strongly challenged these views. Citing Muhammad's tolerance of criticism, for example, CAIR argued that Muhammad would not condone violence in response to novels. Instead, CAIR said, he would gently point out the need for respect of people's beliefs and for truth and accuracy in what is written. Asking whether Muslim reactions were consistent with "what Muhammad would have done," CAIR stated that when he had the opportunity to "strike back at those who attacked him," he refrained from doing so.

In a 2003 INTERNET article, "The Legacy of prophet Muhammad," Muslim-American political scientist Muqtedar Khan discussed the accusation that Muhammad was a pedophile. This view, long a part of Christian criticisms of Muhammad, arose from the tradition that Muhammad is said to have married his wife, Aisha, when she was only six years old. Jerry Vines, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, set off debate and controversy surrounding this issue in a speech in June 2002 during which he called Muhammad a "demon-possessed pedophile." Khan responded that such criticisms are part of a campaign by American evangelicals to demonize Islam and, by extension, Muslims. Khan pointed out that there is disagreement on Ayesha's age at marriage. She may have been between 14 and 21. In any case, Muslims are squarely against child marriage, said Khan.

After the publication of cartoons of Muhammad in a Danish newspaper in September 2005, CAIR also launched the campaign Explore the Life of Muhammad. As part of this campaign, CAIR recommended *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet* (2002), a film produced by Muslim-American

Michael Wolfe, which initially aired on PBS stations. The documentary, also promoted by the National Council of Churches, sought to show what Muhammad means to typical Muslim Americans by interviewing Muslims in their homes, place of business, and mosques.

That CAIR, one of the leading Muslim-American public affairs groups, had to launch a full-blown public relations campaign to defend Muhammad spoke to the precariousness of Muslim-American life in the first decade of the 21st century. Stereotypes about Islam and Muslims showed no sign of abating, and in one 2006 poll, 45 percent of Americans said that they had an unfavorable impression of Islam. Though the legacy of Muhammad continued to have multiple meanings among Muslim-American communities, many Muslim Americans could not help feeling that an attack on their prophet was also an attack on them.

Clinton Bennett

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### *Muhammad Speaks*

*Muhammad Speaks*, possibly the most popular source for news of the developing world among African Americans in the 1960s, was the official weekly newspaper of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) from 1961 to 1975.

In the 1950s, NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) published his own pamphlets such as "Muslim Daily

Prayers" (1957) and articles in black newspapers such as the *Pittsburgh Courier*. Male members of the NOI sold copies of these pamphlets and newspapers in predominantly African-American neighborhoods to spread Muhammad's message and generate revenue for the organization. But Muhammad did not approve of some of the content in the non-Muslim newspapers that carried his articles. Rejecting what he believed to be the black media's use of indecent and harmful materials, he directed his followers to establish their own newspaper. In 1960, MALCOLM X (1925–65) was a leading figure in founding the New York-based newspaper *Mr. Muhammad Speaks*. At the time, he attributed the idea for the paper to Elijah Muhammad, but he later took sole credit for its establishment. In 1961, the paper became known simply as *Muhammad Speaks*, and its main offices moved to CHICAGO.

With help from non-Muslim editor Dan Burley, artist Eugene Majied, and South Asian-American columnist and editor Abdul Basit Naeem, *Muhammad Speaks* became a widely read newspaper among African Americans. The newspaper performed two primary functions. On the one hand, it was the official medium through which the NOI could present itself to the outside world. As such, *Muhammad Speaks* contained Elijah Muhammad's teachings, a column on prayer and other religious matters, hundreds of personal testimonies from NOI members, photographs of members' activities, a Muslim women's column, reports on the movement's schools, and other information on the NOI. On the other hand, the paper also published articles by many non-Muslim syndicated journalists and employed numerous non-Muslims as editorial staff, becoming a trusted source of news among African Americans on matters such as the VIETNAM WAR and the perpetuation of social inequality and racism after the passage of civil rights legislation in 1964 and 1965.

In 1964, author and playwright Richard Durham replaced Burley as editor. Under his leadership from 1964 to 1969, the publication grew significantly. Elijah Muhammad purchased a new printing press, which allowed the staff to produce the periodical completely in-house. The press could print 50,000 copies per hour, and by 1969 the press was printing 400,000 issues of *Muhammad Speaks* per week. It was during the 1960s and under Durham's direction that the paper also became known for its coverage of black history and international news, especially in Africa. Black Power advocates, African-American intellectuals, and others read the paper to follow events in the Congo, learn about the latest developments in the case of Muhammad Ali's conviction for refusing to serve in Vietnam, and ponder comic strips that addressed great heroes in African Islamic history.

In 1969, John Woodford, former editor of *Ebony* magazine, took over as editor. Expanding the newspaper's coverage beyond hard news, he included additional photography and features on music and art. During his time at *Muhammad*

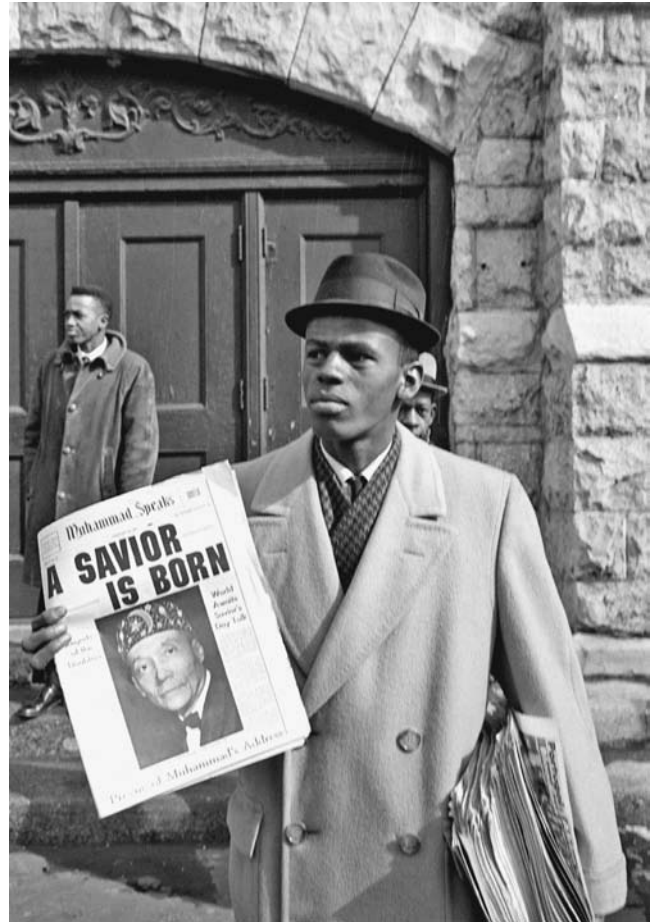


*Speaks*, Woodward reported a regular circulation of 650,000, though editor Leon Forrest later wrote that the actual number was around 70,000. In 1972, Woodford left to join the staff on the *Chicago Sun Times* and later moved to the *New York Times*. Forrest, a novelist and professor, became the next editor. He stayed for about a year before he was succeeded by the first Muslim editor, Askia Muhammad, then known as Charles 67X.

Under Askia Muhammad, the newspaper began to narrow its focus, and the balance between movement news and outside news in the 20- to 30-page paper tipped in favor of the former. During the 1970s, the NOI underwent a dramatic economic expansion. Elijah Muhammad purchased new farms, a Chicago bank, real estate, and other holdings. The NOI also launched an international fish import business, Whiting H & G, which imported fish from Peru and distributed it in African-American neighborhoods through its extensive network of mosques and temples. *Muhammad Speaks* chronicled these activities and reported an increase in circulation to more than 800,000 copies per week. Though exaggerated, there may indeed have been a rise in circulation due to the increasingly efficient organization of the newspaper's distribution and the movement's purchase of additional vans and trucks to deliver papers in a timely fashion to mosques and temples.

For some members of the FRUIT OF ISLAM (FOI), the movement's all-male auxiliary, selling the paper was a religious ritual and a sacred duty. Dressing immaculately in suit and tie, smiling, and showing great respect to their customers, FOI members used their sale of the paper as a chance to "fish" for new members. They testified to what they touted as the high morals and industriousness of NOI members. Each member had a weekly sales quota, often in the hundreds, and the NOI used a combination of incentives and shame to encourage young male believers to sell their copies of the paper. Members who met or exceeded their weekly quotas were regularly featured in the paper itself, and some were flown to Chicago headquarters to meet Elijah Muhammad as a reward for their work. Memorializing members of the FOI who sold the paper in 1969, NOI member George X (George E. Berry) wrote, "They walk the streets, with 'Muhammad Speaks,' / To turn the opposing tide. / 'Muhammad Speaks' to the wealthy; / 'Muhammad Speaks' to the poor. / His 'Message to the Blackman' / Is to live forever more."

In 1975, *Muhammad Speaks* was renamed the *Bilalian News* by W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), Elijah Muhammad's son and successor. The new name referenced Bilal ibn Rabah, a companion of the prophet MUHAMMAD who was the first *muadhdhin*, or prayer caller, in Islam. In 1981, it was again renamed, becoming the *Muslim Journal*. Unlike his father, W. D. Mohammed did not pressure his members to sell the paper. Quotas were abandoned and circulation fell.



A member of the Nation of Islam sells *Muhammad Speaks*, the organization's newspaper, outside the Chicago Coliseum in 1964. (Bettmann/CORBIS)

Though the *Muslim Journal* and the *Final Call*, the paper of the Nation of Islam group led by LOUIS FARRAKHAN (1933– ), continued to serve as vital media for Muslim Americans, no Muslim-American newspaper has ever matched the impact of *Muhammad Speaks* on American society and U.S. politics. Perhaps no Muslim-American periodical has ever been regarded with the same devotion or imbued with the same sense of religious meaning for its producers and distributors. The success of *Muhammad Speaks* in the 1960s and early 1970s represents a key moment in U.S. history when a medium became the message of a religious and social movement.

Monica C. Reed with Edward E. Curtis IV

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**Muhammad, Wallace D.** See W. D. MOHAMMED.

## music

Music has played an important role in Muslim-American communities from slavery to the present day. Representing the diversity of Muslims themselves, the range of music has been vast—from traditional Sufi devotionals to rap. Muslim Americans have also disputed the ethics of music. While some have claimed that music is prohibited in Islam, others have seen it as a form of worship. This variety of musical expression sheds light on both the diversity of Muslim Americans and their enduring contribution to American artistic culture.

### SLAVE MUSIC AND BLUES

Muslims taken as slaves brought their traditional West African music to the Americas in the 17th through 19th centuries. Although many slaves eventually adopted Christianity, remnants of Muslim influence remained in their music. For instance, the Harvest Festival celebrated on the Georgia seacoast by slaves and former slaves was largely influenced by African and Muslim traditions. Once a year around harvest time, the community on Sapelo Island, who traced their ancestry to a Muslim slave from West Africa, would gather to pray and sing throughout the night. After the sun appeared, they would bow while it ascended in the sky. Then singing and dancing would commence to the beat of drums, the rattle of gourd maracas, and the clapping of flat tin plates. The celebration was to honor and give thanks for the annual crop.

Blues also showed African and Muslim influence. Like music from Muslim West Africa, blues featured a style called melisma, or attaching several notes to a single lyrical syllable, and wavy intonation, a series of notes that shift from major to minor scale. The solo singers and stringed instruments featured in slave music and blues also resembled those from Muslim West Africa used in musical storytelling. Historian Sylviane A. Diouf has also compared the *adhan*, the Muslim call to PRAYER, to “Levee Camp Holler,” a song written and sung by former slaves. Both used “the same ornamental notes, tortuously elongated sounds, pauses, nasal humming, simple melody, and impression of human loneliness.”

### JAZZ

Throughout its history, JAZZ has incorporated various religious and cultural influences. Muslim influence began immediately after WORLD WAR II, when many jazz musicians began converting to Islam. In particular, the Ahmadiyya Movement, which began in the 19th century in present-day Pakistan and spread to the United States in the 1920s, was a popular means through which jazz musicians came to Islam.

In the mid-20th century, ART BLAKEY, whose Muslim name was Abdallah ibn Buhaina, formed a Muslim group called the Jazz Messengers. The Jazz Messengers toured extensively, spread the message of Islam through their music, and developed some of the most talented jazz musicians of the era. Prominent members included YUSEF LATEEF and Sahib Shihab. Wynton Marsalis, one of the most popular jazz musicians, was also connected with the Jazz Messengers. The Muslim influence on Marsalis can be seen in his 1996 album *In This House, On This Morning*, which features a piece celebrating the *adhan*.

John Coltrane, another one of the most popular jazz musicians, was also influenced by Islam both musically and personally. His acclaimed 1964 album, *A Love Supreme*, was composed and performed as a devotional to God that incorporated many different religious influences, including Islam. In the poetic accompaniment of the album’s liner notes, Coltrane clearly used language influence by the QUR’AN and Islam. Additionally, Coltrane’s pianist MCCOY TYNER was Muslim, as was his first wife, Juanita Naima Grubb. After Coltrane’s death in 1967, Tyner and another of Coltrane’s protégés, Pharoah Sanders, released albums with distinct religious, including Muslim, influence. In 1969, Sanders released the album *Jewels of Thought*, which included a chant for peace, “Hum-Allah-Hum-Allah-Hum-Allah.” Sanders also worked with other Muslim-American musicians like Idris Muhammad and pianist AHMAD JAMAL, and international Muslim musicians like Mahmoud Guinia.

Islam’s influence on the musical structures of jazz has been subtle. In general, Muslim-American jazz musicians have not used classical Islamic music or its motifs but have defined their own relationship between Islam and music. For instance, some jazz artists have incorporated African, Middle Eastern, or South Asian styles and instruments to connote their Muslim identity, while others have used their albums’ liner notes to discuss religion.

### SUFI MUSIC

Many Sufi Muslim Americans have used *dhikr*, the “remembrance of God” through recitation, singing, playing instruments, and dancing, as a form of spiritual expression. The pioneering Sufi musician in America was INAYAT KHAN, born into a family of prominent Indian musicians. Khan first traveled to the United States in 1910. As explained in his autobiography, he planned to communicate Sufism through music: “I came to America with the Sufi Message, but the only means which I had to carry out my mission was by music, my profession.” During his tour, perhaps a few dozen or fewer Americans converted to Sufism. Khan married Ora Ray Baker, a relative of Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science. Later, his family followed in his footsteps and returned to the United States as Sufi leaders.

After Khan, other foreign Sufi musicians traveled to America. Their objective was not explicitly religious, and their visits did not often result in more conversions to Islam. Rather, their presence in America contributed to the growing popularity of world and fusion music as they collaborated with non-Muslim American musicians. In 1975, the Pakistani group Sabri Brothers introduced Qawwali Sufi music to Americans at a sold-out concert in NEW YORK CITY's Carnegie Hall. As the *New York Times* reported: "the audience was clapping and shouting deliriously . . . it was really a reaffirmation of the power of music." In the 1990s, another Pakistani Qawwali musician, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, achieved fame in the United States. Besides performing traditional music, Khan collaborated with Eddie Vedder from Pearl Jam for the soundtrack to the 1995 movie *Dead Man Walking* and with Peter Gabriel for the soundtrack to the 1988 movie *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Sufi music also influenced classical musicians. In 1998, cellist Yo-Yo Ma began the Silk Road Project, a multicultural music program that features Sufi musicians and songs from Eurasia.

#### RAP / HIP-HOP

In the 1990s, music journalist Harry Allen called Islam the "official religion" of HIP-HOP. Indeed, since its emergence in the mid-1970s, rap and hip-hop have borne indisputable marks of Muslim influence. The NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) has been particularly important because several of its members became mainstream musicians, and because this music became a vehicle to popularize its message of Islam and black nationalism. For instance, Public Enemy, one of the first rap groups to achieve superstar status, is affiliated with the NOI, discusses its ideas in their lyrics, and samples audio clips of MALCOLM X and LOUIS FARRAKHAN in their songs. Farrakhan, also a musician (a former calypso singer and classical violinist), reciprocated this relationship with the music world: In 2001, he delivered the keynote speech at the National Hip-Hop Summit and has featured a weekly music column in the NOI newspaper, *The Final Call*.

Sunni Muslims have also been influential in mainstream rap and hip-hop. MOS DEF, a Grammy Award-winning musician, asserted the intimate relationship between music and Islam: Both rap and the Qur'an use language in a similar manner. Mos Def and other Sunni rappers have also woven Islamic sounds of worship into their melodies. Mos Def opened his 1999 album, *Black on Both Sides*, with the *basmallah*, a Muslim invocation meaning "in the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful." Everlast repeatedly sings the first half of the *shahadah*, the Muslim testament of faith, in his 1999 Grammy Award-winning song, "Put Your Lights On." And Lupe Fiasco, a Grammy-nominated musician, plays off Kanye West's "Jesus Walks" with the song "Muhammad

Walks." In this song, Lupe recites the *basmallah* and samples the *adhan*.

Other musicians influenced by Islam include Jurassic 5, Afrika Bambaata, Common, The Roots, Ice Cube, Beanie Sigel, Napoleon of Outlawz, Rza of WU-TANG CLAN, and Q-Tip and Ali Shaheed Muhammad of A TRIBE CALLED QUEST.

#### TAQWACORE / PUNK MUSIC

TAQWACORE is a subculture of Muslim punk music that emerged after Michael Muhammad Knight's novel *The Taqwacores*. Knight, a white American convert to Islam, wrote the book in 2002 and initially distributed photocopies of his work. It was eventually published in 2005. The book describes a fictitious group of Muslim punks in New York City whose lives included prayer, parties, music, and Mohawk haircuts, as they searched for "what it means to be young and Muslim in modern-day America." The term *taqwacore* combines the Arabic word *taqwa*, "God-consciousness," and the slang word "hardcore," a subcategory of punk rock. After the release of Knight's novel, several taqwacore bands emerged, including the Kominas, Vote Hezbollah, 8-bit, Al-Thawra, Diacritical, and Secret Trial Five. The Kominas have arguably become the most famous taqwacore band. This group of Punjabi musicians living in the Boston suburbs recorded their first song, "Rumi Was a Homo (But Wahhaj Is a Fag)," a musical response to homophobic comments made by Imam Siraj Wahhaj.

Much of taqwacore music has ridiculed prominent Muslim-American leaders and the traditions of the Muslim-American mainstream. For instance, to coincide with the 2005 annual ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA Convention, several taqwacore bands collaborated to produce a compilation CD called *Hamza Don't Surf* (a reference to an article that described Hamza Yusuf as a surfer-turned-sheikh). But taqwacore has also ridiculed American culture and U.S. foreign policy with songs like the Kominas' "Suicide Bomb the Gap" and 8-bit's "I'll Be Your Terrorist." Taqwacore has rebelled against both American and traditional Muslim establishments. As Knight explained, "In this so-called clash of civilizations, Taqwacore is about sticking the middle finger in both directions." However, Knight and taqwacore musicians have made it clear that the music is not about blasphemy or attacking Islam; rather, taqwacore has created an alternative to the Muslim-American mainstream and the moral rigidity associated with it.

#### MUSIC FOR MUSLIMS

Muslim Americans have also created a new music genre specifically for their community. Like those in the mainstream, these musicians have drawn on both Islamic and American styles. For these musicians, however, Islam is the central theme, and Muslims are the primary audience.

The Islamic Society of North America has promoted many of these musicians through performances at its annual national convention and MYNA-RAPS, a project that produces the albums of Muslim musicians. Its most prominent musicians are NATIVE DEEN, an African-American hip-hop trio. Native Deen uses only vocals and percussion in their music, in accordance with MYNA-RAPS's prohibition on wind and string instruments, which are considered impermissible by some Islamic scholars because they are thought to arouse passions and encourage sinful actions. Like mainstream secular musicians, Native Deen boasts several albums, music videos, an elaborate Web site, an online store, and an international concert tour. Prominent musicians outside MYNA-RAPS production include Tyson, Brother Dash, Seven8Six, and Kareem Salama. European Muslim musicians such as Sami Yusuf, Yusuf Islam, Outlandish, and Mecca2Medina also frequently perform in the United States and have many listeners.

This new music genre is also supported by the emergence of Muslim record labels. Anas Canon, founder of the label Remarkable Current, has explained this need: "When presenting on someone else's stage, we will never be able to fully express the true beauty and balance of Islam. But when WE control our presentation, we have command over the world's perception of Islam as displayed through Muslim culture." Some international Muslim labels, such as Meem Music and Global One Records, have branches in the United States and sign American musicians. Other labels, like Jamal Records, are widely distributed in the United States. Muslim music has not been a unified genre. Instead, Islamic themes, symbols, and multiple musical genres have influenced many different musical styles throughout U.S. history. Muslim influence in African-American music began as a faint echo of Muslim ancestry and has grown over the centuries. Today, Muslim musicians enjoy mainstream success and their own music niche among Muslim Americans. This mutual exchange between Islam and American music has not only had an impact on the history of Muslim-American music culture but also on American music culture as a whole.

Caitlin Yoshiko Buysse

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### Muslim Alliance in North America

Formally organized in 2005 after several years of planning, the Muslim Alliance in North America (MANA) is a Muslim-American religious organization that focuses on the religious, political, and social concerns of American-born Muslims. It quickly emerged as a leading umbrella organization for black Sunni Muslim mosques, individuals, and organizations not associated with the leadership of W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), the leader who transformed the original Nation of Islam into a Sunni Muslim group.

The first elected leader, or *amir*, of MANA was SIRAJ WAHHAJ (1950– ), the Brooklyn-based African-American Muslim leader. Its secretary-general, responsible for administration, was University of Kentucky religious studies professor Ihsan Bagby. Other leading figures in the establishment and operation of MANA have included University of Michigan religious studies professor Sherman Jackson, religious leader Talib Abdur Rashid, Zaytuna Institute founder HAMZA YUSUF (1960– ), prison chaplain R. Mukhtar Curtis, and religious scholar ZAID SHAKIR (1956– ). Though led primarily by men, the executive committee of MANA has explicitly sought to include women, and social worker Aneesa Nadir and English instructor Halima Toure have been members.



Reflecting the viewpoints of several of these scholars and religious leaders, MANA has focused on providing mosque-based solutions to social and economic problems, especially in urban areas; increasing the number of conversions to Islam; and taking a critical stance on aspects of U.S. domestic and foreign policy that the group believes is unjust. Many of MANA's leader, including Ihsan Bagby, Zaid Shakir, and Hamza Yusuf, have been interviewed by mainstream media outlets on issues pertaining to Muslim-American affairs. Its leaders have also been active writers whose publications have appeared in peer-reviewed journals and books, as well as on the organization's Web site. To cite one example, Sherman A. Jackson's *Islam and the Blackamerican* (2005) articulates a vision for American Islam that preserves African-American Muslim concerns with social justice while also making certain that personal piety and spirituality never become subordinate to politics.

In 2008, MANA held its first national conference during Thanksgiving weekend in PHILADELPHIA, the same city in which the organization was first launched. During the conference, a lifetime service award was given to Muhammad Ali (1942– ) and a community service award was presented to Tayyibah Taylor, founder of *AZIZAH* magazine. Conference topics included Muslim-American history, criminal justice, mission work, Islamic jurisprudence, mosque development, Muslim-American YOUTH, HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, POLITICS, FAMILIES, and WOMEN. The group also sponsored an evening comedy show, *Allah Made Me Funny*.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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### Muslim American Society

Emerging from a Chicago-based organization founded in 1969 called the "Cultural Society," the Muslim American Society (MAS) was formally established in 1992 and 1993 by a group of predominately ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS who hoped to create an "Islamic revival and reform movement that uplifts the individual, family, and society." In 1998, the MAS opened a national office in Falls Church, Virginia, and by the beginning of the 21st century, it grew to include thousands of Muslim Americans who were members of approximately 40 local chapters across the nation.

In 1999, MAS launched its own magazine, *The American Muslim*, a bimonthly glossy publication that includes fea-

tures on ISLAMIC THOUGHT and RELIGIOUS LIFE, children's cartoons and stories, Muslim involvement in politics both at home and abroad, the arts and culture, and advertisements from travel agencies, charities, and Muslim publishers. The November/December 2003 issue, for example, discussed the impact of the USA PATRIOT Act on Muslim Americans, the use of herbs and other natural remedies for healing, a comic strip called Maged and Mazen, and the growing "trialogue of the Abrahamic faiths [Judaism, Christianity, and Islam]."

In the 21st century, its Web site has offered users news and information of concern to the Muslim-American community, information about Islamic civilization and religion, and an "Ask the Imam" feature. From 2004 to 2006, the organization's Web site actively hosted online chats with Muslim-American imams, or religious leaders, in which Internet users could ask for an online FATWA, or religious opinion, on questions ranging from the circumstances under which one can seek an Islamic divorce to the permissibility of drawing a nude model for a college class.

In 2002, MAS registered its own online educational institution, the Islamic American University, as a tax-exempt agency. The institution, which is not accredited, has offered associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees in Islamic studies, attempting to educate both Muslims and non-Muslims through its correspondence and online courses. Its Winter 2009 schedule, for example, included more than 30 distance-learning classes in ARABIC on *fiqh*, or Islamic jurisprudence, *da'wa*, or missionary work, hadith, or reports about prophet Muhammad and his companions, and the QUR'AN. The school also maintained a physical campus in Southfield, Michigan.

In 2002, MAS held a joint convention with the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA, a predominately SOUTH



Imam Mahdi Bray of the Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation leads a protest outside the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C., against Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip, on December 30, 2008. (Courtesy of the Author)



ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM organization. Talk of a merger between the two organizations proceeded, but the two groups decided instead to coordinate their education campaigns and continue to hold joint conventions. The theme of their 2003 gathering at Hyatt Regency in CHICAGO was "Muslims, Citizens of the West: Rights, Duties, and Prospects." In 2007, the conference was devoted to the subject of "The Qur'an: Relevant Guidance for a Pluralistic America." The conference included lectures and workshops, a bazaar, prayers, and parenting clinics.

After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, the MAS also established the MAS Freedom Foundation whose goal was to protect the civil rights of Muslim Americans by partnering with like-minded organizations, lobbying Congress, and raising awareness. Its executive director in 2009 was Mahdi Bray, a religious leader and political activist from greater Washington, D.C., who has helped to organize the Muslim-American vote and led opposition to the IRAQ WAR. Like the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS, MAS Freedom Foundation also established local chapters. The North Carolina chapter, for example, was led by Khalilah Sabra, who participated in local interfaith dialogues and the activities of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and encouraged fellow Muslims to become more politically active.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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## Muslim Brotherhood See REVIVALISM.

### Muslim Girls Training—General Civilization Class

The Muslim Girls Training—General Civilization Class (MGT) trained female members of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) to embody the virtues of good Muslim women. According to Nation of Islam tradition, the MGT was established by W. D. FARD in the early 1930s. The female counterpart to the male FRUIT OF ISLAM (FOI), the MGT taught women life skills such as sewing, cooking, housekeeping, child rearing, hygiene, reading, writing, proper diet, and self-defense to prepare them as wives and mothers. The MGT also educated women about Islam and black history through the study of the QUR'AN, the Bible, and *Supreme Wisdom*, a 1957 text published by NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD.

The MGT prescribed strict rules of dress and diet to instill modesty, discipline, and bodily purification in women. Women in the MGT wore a fully covering white uniform consisting of a long gown, cape, gloves, and box hat. While symbols of sexual immodesty like makeup and high heels were prohibited, the MGT instructed women to behave in a ladylike manner. Theoretically speaking, women were to refrain from swearing and yelling and were to practice walking with good posture and grace. At the same time, historical films depict MGT members shouting, laughing, and "grooving" as they performed military-like drills and marches in some MGT meetings.

Women were also expected to follow a specific diet and abstain from what the NOI considered "slave food." Proper body weight was sometimes enforced through mandatory weight checks. While some members of the MGT found such discipline to be oppressive, others enjoyed the sisterhood and racial solidarity that it helped to produce.

Similar to the FOI, the MGT was responsible for NOI security and recruitment. All women who entered NOI temples and mosques were searched by the MGT; prohibited items like alcohol, cigarettes, nail files, and makeup were confiscated. The MGT also created links with women outside the NOI to recruit new members and to discuss mutual community concerns.

The organizational structure of the MGT paralleled the FOI. The MGT operated both nationally and locally; national headquarters were located in CHICAGO, while local branches were attached to each temple. The Supreme Captain headed the national MGT and resided in Chicago so she could take direct orders from Elijah Muhammad. The Supreme Captain then commanded the local captains of every temple. Each local captain also took orders from the temple's minister and subsequently directed the first, second, and third lieutenants in her local squad. This chain of command often broke down as local chapters either ignored or selectively enforced orders from headquarters in Chicago.

During the height of the NOI in the 1950s and early 1960s, Sister Lottie Muhammad, daughter of Elijah, served as the Supreme Captain of the MGT. The wives of many prominent male NOI members also led or participated in the MGT. CLARA MUHAMMAD, wife of Elijah, trained and taught women in Chicago. Ethel Sharrieff, wife of FOI Supreme Captain Raymond Sharrieff and daughter of Elijah, proposed and implemented the idea of an MGT bakery. The first bakery began in Ethel's home basement and eventually developed into a nationwide business. Betty Shabazz, wife of MALCOLM X, was an MGT instructor who lectured on hygiene and health, and Khadijah Farrakhan enrolled in the New York MGT while her husband, LOUIS FARRAKHAN, served as minister.



Female Nation of Islam members, also part of the Muslim Girls Training, attend a Muslim rally in New York in 1963. (*Library of Congress*)

Since the NOI viewed women as the foundation of civilization, the MGT's role in strengthening, educating, and disciplining women was considered crucial. Led in 2008 by National Captain Aishah Muhammad and National Vanguard Captain Sharrieffah Muhammad in Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam, the MGT has remained active, participating in its traditional activities and offering supplementary programs for women and girls.

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#### Muslim Public Affairs Council

Established in 1988 as a nonprofit organization, the Los Angeles-based Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) has sought to further the interests of Muslim Americans in U.S. POLITICS, to encourage interfaith dialogues among Muslims and people of other faiths, and to fight STEREOTYPES of Islam and Muslims in American media and culture, especially FILM. Led by its longtime executive director Salam al-Marayati, by the 21st century MPAC had five chapters in addition to its main office in LOS ANGELES.

Since 1991, MPAC has issued media awards to various artists and filmmakers who are "voices of courage and conscience" in American society. Award winners have included Spike Lee for *Malcolm X* (1992), Warner Brothers for *Syriana*

(2005), and Lawrence Bender for *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006). In addition, MPAC has advised various television shows, including the CW's series *Alien in America*, on their portrayal of Muslims.

MPAC has sought to stake out political and social positions that emphasize what it considers to be the uniquely balanced perspectives of Muslim Americans toward controversial topics such as terrorism and UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS with the Muslim world. For example, in September 1990, the group wrote an op-ed article in *USA Today* that was titled "Middle Eastern Dictators Don't Speak for Islam," arguing that many Middle Eastern leaders abused Islam in justifying their policies. At the time, Iraq's army under Saddam Hussein was occupying Kuwait. MPAC both condemned the Iraqi invasion and called on the United States to withdraw its troops from the region, advocating a peaceful solution to the crisis.

In 2000, MPAC opened an office in Washington, D.C., where it hoped to influence domestic and foreign policies of concern to Muslim Americans. That year, MAHER MUHAMMAD HATHOUT (1936– ), an MPAC board member, delivered an invocation at the Democratic National Convention. MPAC also denounced the Taliban government in Afghanistan and its destruction of the ancient Buddhist religious sites and statues in the country.

MPAC immediately condemned the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, and in December 2001 staged a conference entitled "The Rising Voice of Moderate Muslims," trying to emphasize that violent extremists did not represent mainstream Muslims. It also sought to provide support to the thousands of foreign visitors from Arab and Muslim countries who faced increased scrutiny after 9/11. In 2003, MPAC joined with other civil rights and advocacy groups to monitor the Immigration and Naturalization Service's treatment of Arabs and Muslims.

In its publications and conferences after 9/11, MPAC consistently claimed, echoing a widespread view among Muslim Americans, that counterterrorism efforts must be careful to avoid demonizing all Muslims. Its 2004 conference, "Counterproductive Counterterrorism," outlined what it believed was the negative impact of "Islamophobia," the irrational fear of Islam and Muslims, on fighting religious extremism. In 2005, it launched a grassroots campaign to fight terrorism, giving suggested guidelines for both law enforcement and Muslim-American religious leaders in addressing the issue.

In 2007, MPAC joined the Progressive Jewish Alliance in sponsoring "NewGround: A Muslim-Jewish Partnership for Change," for blunt dialogue around controversial issues such as Israel/Palestine, women's rights, and religious pluralism. In 2009, NewGround launched a pilot program in which participants read and discussed each other's sacred scriptures.

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### Muslim Students Association

The Muslim Students Association (sometimes also called the Muslim Students' Association or Muslim Student Association) of the United States and Canada, otherwise known as MSA National, or simply MSA, was created to strengthen ties among Muslim-American students in January 1963 at a conference at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Though the organization included only 13 chapters during its first year of operations, by 1967, there were 36 chapters. By 1970, 68 campus chapters were affiliated with the organization. Such growth continued in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and by 2010, there were more than 250 affiliated MSA chapters in the United States and Canada, in addition to many other Muslim student groups who maintained loose ties with MSA National but retained their official autonomy from the organization.

### ORIGINS

The organization's founders included 75 students—most of whom were seeking graduate degrees—from Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, India, and various Arab countries. At least some MSA members were also Americans, as illustrated by the case of the MSA chapter at Southern Illinois University, which was led in 1966 by Linda Clark, a white woman. Following the initial conference in January 1963, a substructure soon developed, and local chapters were connected on both regional and national levels. Each year, MSA holds an annual convention that featured a menagerie of activities, all of which helps to bolster the influence of the organization.

While MSA shared many of the same goals as its organizational predecessors, including the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (FIA), its focus on and connections to foreign and recently arrived immigrant Muslims gave the organization a recruitment advantage after 1965, when the liberalization of immigration policy led to a large influx of Muslim immigrants into the United States. In the 1970s, funded partly through the missionary outreach of Saudi Arabia and other oil-producing countries, MSA published books and pamphlets with the aim of helping new Muslim immigrants live an Islamic life in the West. For example, *Al-Ittihad* (The unity), which became a biannual journal, was first published in the 1970s.

*Al-Ittihad* frequently discussed the ideas of the most prominent Muslim intellectuals of the era, including Abu al-Ala Mawdudi, the founder of the Jamaat-i Islami





Muslim Students Association (MSA) chapter, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, 1966. The MSA was launched as a national organization in 1963 at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Headed by President Linda Clark [front row, center], the MSA chapter at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, hosted weekly prayers, celebrated Ramadan, and invited guest speakers to campus. (Special Collections Research Center, Morris Library, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale)

in Pakistan, and Sayyid Qutb, a leader in the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. During the first years of the publication, almost every issue of *Al-Ittihad* contained favorable sentiments toward a number of Islamic revivalist movements throughout the world and at least one article by Mawdudi or Qutb. Both Mawdudi and Qutb advocated the application of Islamic teachings in private and public life, believing that Islam contained teaching on every aspect of life, from how to interact with one's spouse to how to run a government. Qutb was particularly critical of what he considered to be Western immorality and believed his own country to be un-Islamic and in need of an Islamic revolution. Many MSA members disagreed with Qutb's radical politics, but they admired his religious verve and commitment to leading a pious life.

In addition to *Al-Ittihad*, the widely distributed MSA *Newsletter*, first published in 1971, became a source of community news before it gave way to its successor, *Islamic Horizons*, in 1976. That year MSA also published *Parents Manual: A Guide for Muslim Parents Living in North America*. Additionally, individual MSA university chapters created publications of their own, including UCLA's *Al-Talib* (Student) magazine, which was founded in 1990, and the MSA chapter at Salisbury University in Maryland, which published a *COOKBOOK* of "Muslim family recipes from around the world."

In 1971, as an attempt to solidify MSA into an organization with strong, central governance, a rudimentary headquarters operating from Al-Amin Mosque was established in Gary, Indiana. Two years later, in 1973, a full-time executive director was appointed, and in September 1975, the constitu-

tion was revised, creating a staff of full-time workers. MSA left the mosque in Gary in order to establish a more permanent headquarters in Plainfield, Indiana, in 1983, and later moved to Falls Church, Virginia.

#### CHANGES AFTER 1975

The 1975 constitution no longer aimed primarily at providing guidance to new Muslim immigrants but instead adopted guidelines that applied to Muslims in the United States more broadly. The MSA shifted from a group of Muslim students with no plans of remaining in the United States to an organization that hoped to become a powerful voice for all Muslim Americans in both the United States and Canada. While MSA was initially influenced by the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt and the Jamaat-i Islami of the Indian subcontinent, such influences waned as it became larger and more heterogeneous. The organization gradually developed into a network of communities that challenged its members to put their Muslim identities before their loyalties to their particular ethnic and linguistic groups.

MSA spawned—both directly and indirectly—a number of other Muslim-American organizations, including the ISLAMIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA, the ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS, the ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS, the FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA, and many more. Perhaps most notable, however, was the MSA's direct involvement in the genesis of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA), which became one of the most influential and largest Muslim organizations in the United States. In 1982, after



approximately six years of discussions among 50 prominent Muslim-American leaders, former MSA leader Sayyid M. Syeed announced the formation of ISNA at the annual MSA convention in Bloomington, Indiana. Both ISNA and MSA grew in the last two decades of the 20th century and in September 1998 met jointly in St. Louis, Missouri, to celebrate MSA's 35th annual meeting. More than 100 sessions took place at the conference.

This era also saw a sea change in the leadership of the MSA. In the beginning of its history, MSA leaders were mainly men, while Muslim women assisted with typing, publishing, and fundraising. However, as more and more American women assumed positions of leadership in American society in the 1970s and beyond, the leadership of the MSA reflected these larger social changes. By 2001, well over half of MSA National's elected leadership were women, though the president's office had always been occupied by a male. On June 25, 2004, Hadia Mubarak, a graduate student at Georgetown

University, became the first woman elected to the presidency of MSA National—and the first American-born student to hold the office.

Mubarak had run previously and lost, but her perseverance was eventually rewarded. Her election marked a doubly significant occasion, both as a symbol of the advancement of gender equality and of the growing American national identity of the organization. In the same year, the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR) gave Mubarak their Islamic Community Service Award for her achievements and efforts. Since then, other women have become MSA leaders, including Asma Mirza, who was the second female president of MSA. A variety of MSA university chapters throughout the United States have also had women presidents, including Duke University and the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). Some chapters of the MSA, such as MSA-Northwestern University, even created bylaws requiring copresidency to be shared by a female and male.



Since its establishment in 1963, the Muslim Students Association has become a visible presence on many college campuses. (Tom Carter/PhotoEdit)

### LOCAL AUTONOMY AND NONALIGNED MSAS

Since 1963, several MSA organizations on American campuses have remained officially independent from MSA National. In addition, there have been splits from the MSA National organization, including the Persian-Speaking Group of the MSA (MSA-PSG), which was founded by SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICANS following the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Another organization that assumed the MSA title but never held official ties to MSA National was MSA West (which was different from MSA National's Western branch called "West Zone USA"). MSA West was founded in the late 1990s in order to serve Muslim students in the western United States, and while it has remained independent from MSA National, the two organizations have cooperated on a number of endeavors, including leadership training and joint conferences.

Individual MSA chapters have also engaged in community awareness and service projects that are specific to their campuses. In 1994, Muslim students at DePaul University in Chicago founded the Inner-city Muslim Action Network (IMAN), which consisted of a group of volunteers who would gather at a major Arab center in Chicago to help children with their homework and oversee recreational activities.

Some local MSA chapters have also struggled to fend off attacks from conservative critics of Islam such as David Horowitz, whose defamation campaigns have attempted to link the MSA with terrorism. Horowitz's criticism of the MSA are based largely on the organization's former links to overseas organizations such as the Muslim World League, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Jamaat-i Islami, which Horowitz considers to be terrorist organizations. Three of MSA's 75 founders in the 1960s were members of the Muslim Brotherhood, and Horowitz assumed that any organization once linked to these organizations must be anti-American.

In 2008, Horowitz published a paid advertisement in the UCSB's campus newspaper, *The Daily Nexus*, entitled, "Stop the Jihad on College Campuses," accusing the local chapter of the MSA of recruiting public speakers who "are calling for the execution of gays, killing of Jews and [who] support terrorist jihad against America." The ad appeared as part of Horowitz's third annual Islamo-Fascism Awareness Week. But UCSB's MSA chapter had no ties to terrorists, the Muslim Brotherhood, or the Jamaat-i Islami. It may have sponsored campus speakers who opposed aspects of UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS with the Muslim world, especially the IRAQ WAR, and advocated socially conservative family values, but there was no evidence that UCSB's MSA supported the execution of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons or supported "terrorist jihads" against America. When Horowitz spoke at UCSB in May 2008, his list of MSA chapters comprising part of what he called a "jihad network" did

not include the UCSB chapter, demonstrating further the gross generalities of his claims.

While MSA National's publishing house and book dissemination network once focused on what might be considered "fundamentalist" or revivalist literature, the autonomy of local MSA chapters and more than four decades of MSA National's evolution have made it impossible to characterize MSA with large brushstrokes. The various expressions of MSA, as well as MSA National itself, became too diverse and heterogeneous to be characterized by any single political ideology.

### CONCLUSION

While its initial goals were shaped largely by foreign Muslim students who came to study in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s, the MSA evolved into a national organization with a broad reach throughout Muslim America. From a defensive organization concerned largely with preserving Islamic identity in what was seen as a hostile environment, it has evolved into a group focused on crafting a specifically Muslim-American identity. As a symbol of this change, in 2007 the MSA adopted a new red, white, and blue logo that fused elements of the U.S. and Canadian flags, including the maple leaf and the stars and stripes, into two Islamic crescent moons. In the middle of the logo, cradled by the two moons, is the word "salam," or peace. The success of the MSA as a national organization has led to the establishment of several other Muslim-American associations, which together have aided Muslim-American attempts to influence American society. From religious outreach efforts and political activism to community service projects that address issues of homelessness, youth violence, and failed schools, MSA has had an important impact on American society.

See also REVIVALISM.

Elliott Bazzano

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### **Muslim Sunrise**

Founded in 1921, *The Muslim Sunrise: A Journal of the Islamic Renaissance in America* was one of the earliest Muslim publications originating in the United States. It took its name from the quote of the prophet Muhammad that the journal frequently displayed: "In the latter days, the sun shall rise from the west." Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq (1872–1957), the first Ahmadiyya missionary to arrive in America, founded the magazine in DETROIT, MICHIGAN. As of 2010, it continued to appear as a quarterly journal of the American Ahmadiyya Muslim community, serving as a platform for discussions on Islam and other religions. The contemporary *Sunrise* offers an Islamic perspective on contemporary issues. Their official Web site highlights the role Islam plays within a "changing society" and the journal's particular interest in "rehabilitating the relationship" between Islamic and Western cultures.

The Ahmadiyya were a pioneering force in the history of Islam in the United States and led many African Americans to convert to Islam. The *Muslim Sunrise*, as an Ahmadiyya media outlet, is therefore an important source for the history of Islam in the United States during the first half of the 20th century. In its early decades, the format of the journal was fairly consistent: It featured a translated passage from the Qur'an, followed by sayings of the prophet Muhammad, excerpts from the writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (the founder and most important religious figure of the Ahmadiyya Movement in India), and an address, prayer, or lecture from a prominent Ahmadi leader or scholar. The articles consisted of theological material, stories from the Qur'an or Bible, and interpretations of Islamic principles or practices. There were also articles that addressed current world events, often from Southern Asia or the Middle East, and also on events from local Muslim American communities. The *Sunrise* published press notices, obituaries of prominent Muslims, a listing of recent American converts and their new Arabic names, and other statistics and reports of missionary work. It also published letters of congratulations and condolences sent to famous and well-connected individuals, their responses, and letters commenting on lectures given at churches and social gatherings.

More recently, the *Muslim Sunrise* organized articles around particular themes, providing commentary on current issues from varying Islamic perspectives. There have been regular features such as letters to the editor, reviews of books and other media, and an interview section in which the *Sunrise* staff has met with religious figures, scholars, and civic leaders from the United States and abroad. Some columns have discussed daily life and the personal practice of Islam from historical and contemporary viewpoints. The "Friday Sermon" and "Poetry Corner" sections have appeared regularly alongside a new feature, "Religion and Science," in which the *Sunrise* has argued that, although other religious

teachings cannot be reconciled with scientific fact or evidence, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community asserts that "the laws of nature and God are in harmony."

Karima W. Abidine

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### **MuslimWakeUp!**

MuslimWakeUp! was cofounded in January 2003 by Ahmed Nassef and Jawad Ali, two Muslim-American graduates from the University of California, Los Angeles, who wished to "reflect the voice of Muslim Americans" and to begin a dialogue among them in "a more open Islamic context." The organization began primarily as a Web site ([www.muslim-wakeup.com](http://www.muslim-wakeup.com)), headquartered in Pleasantville, New York, which until 2007 functioned as "a progressive online Muslim-American magazine."

From the outset, the Web site gathered both praise and criticism as it tried to promote what it defined as a more progressive Islam that was contrasted to the views of more extremist groups. For example, the organization launched a campaign to "Hug a Jew," which attempted to displace the visceral idea that Jews and Israel were somehow anathema to the Muslim experience. In addition to proclaiming that Jews, too, were creatures of God and shared a common humanity with Muslims, the site argued that the Jewish experience provided opportunities for reflection and thought among Muslims. It also featured the stories of several Jewish Americans who were pro-Palestinian or anti-Zionist. Another feature, "Sex and the Umma," one of the most popular sections of the Web site, touched on issues such as abortion, polyandry, homosexuality, and same-sex marriage through fiction as well as editorial and opinion pieces.

MuslimWakeUp! also opposed "all forms of oppression, bigotry, sexism and racism" and aligned itself with other progressive Muslims, including the Progressive Muslims Union. On March 18, 2005, these groups sponsored mixed-gender Friday prayers in NEW YORK CITY led by Islamic studies professor and activist AMINA WADUD. The event, which violated the traditional Islamic prohibition against a woman leading men in prayer, was originally scheduled to take place in a mosque and then later an art gallery, but was moved to St. John the Divine, an Episcopalian cathedral, after a number

of bomb threats. The event sparked intense debate and was both condemned and applauded by individuals and Muslim groups around the world.

In November 2007, the muslimwakeup.com Web site ceased to be active. Cofounder Ahmed Nassef stopped working on the site for unexplained reasons, and cofounder Jawad Ali left the United States to aid the victims of the 2006 earthquake in Pakistan. In addition, many of the participants on the site disagreed over the direction of the progressive movement, especially on their stances toward U.S. foreign policy. Various progressive Muslim groups, including the

Progressive Muslim Union, Muslims for Progressive Values, and ProgressiveIslam.org provided venues and spaces for the ongoing debates. Though MuslimWakeUp! was short-lived, for four years it provided a rallying point for activists, students, journalists and young Muslim Americans hoping to counter stereotypical images of Muslims as socially conservative and to debate the future of Islam.

*Rizwan Mawani*

**Muslim World League** See MISSIONARIES.





## Naqshbandi Sufi Order

Naqshbandi Sufis practice a form of *SUFISM* in which participants use silence and internal contemplation in order to connect with God. The term Naqshbandi incorporates two ideas: the *naqsh* or “engraving” the name of Allah in the heart and the band or “bond” describing the link between the individual and the Creator. The Naqshbandis are also known as “silent Sufis” because of their practice of the silent meditation of the heart. The Naqshbandi Sufi Order traces its origins to Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, a seventh-century caliph who succeeded the prophet MUHAMMAD in leading the early Muslim community.

In the middle ages, the Naqshbandi school of thought flourished in central Asia and India, and in the 20th century spread to China, the Soviet Union, Western Europe, and the United States. Although Naqshbandis believe that other Sufi paths are able to find a path to God through *DHIKR*, the repetition of the names of God, the Naqshbandis believe there are 70,000 veils between the uninitiated and the station that prophet Muhammad reached and that *dhikr* should be practiced in silence. A Naqshbandi master “rends these veils in descending order,” leaving one veil left to prevent strain on the person from “the contemplation of Divine Reality.” A grand *shaykh*, or religious leader, in the Naqshbandi order does not rend that last veil until the highest state of perfection in the mind has been reached or until the grand *shaykh* has only seven breaths left on his deathbed.

Naqshbandis have a significant presence worldwide, with Shah Naqshband’s (1317–?) school and mosque being the largest Islamic center of learning in Central Asia. By the 21st century, there were approximately 18 Naqshbandi centers in the United States and two in Canada. The Naqshbandi order was led by Muhammad Nazim al-Haqqani, the 40th member in a chain of Sufi leaders. His son-in-law, Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, was the Naqshbandi representative in the United States when he and his family relocated in 1990 and has since established an *INTERNET* site and classes to teach Americans about the order. The center for the Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order in America is in Fenton, Michigan. This fairly conservative Islamic spiritual movement has estab-

lished itself as one of the fastest growing Sufi orders in North America.

In the first decade of the 21st century, an offshoot known as the Naqshbandiyaa-Mujaddidiyya Order maintained the Golden Sufi Center in Inverness, California. According to many community members, Irina Tweedie, a Russian woman who was taught by the Naqshbandi teacher Guru Bhai Sahib, brought the Naqshbandi Sufi movement to the West in 1985. The center in Inverness has overseen the task of presenting the teachings of the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya Order to the public and has operated meditation groups in Northern California, NEW YORK CITY, LOS ANGELES, Seattle, Minnesota, CHICAGO, and in Canada. In addition to emphasizing the silent meditation of the heart, the order also places great importance on the use of dreams, which are seen as a form of guidance along the path. At meetings, practices usually include silent meditation followed by “dreamwork.” Participants are encouraged to share their own dreams. The center has also sponsored retreats, lectures, and seminars, and maintained a trilingual Web site. Leader Irina Tweedie retired in 1992 and was succeeded by Llewellyn Vaughan Lee.

While there are no definitive figures on the size of these Naqshbandi orders, it is estimated that there are several thousand members in the United States. The Naqshbandis, like other Muslim-American groups, have benefited from their use of the Internet, which has enabled them to convert many nonimmigrant Americans to Islam. The high profile of women in the community and its critiques of consumerism and environmental degradation have also appealed to many American members. While Naqshbandi groups have succeeded in establishing a considerable following in the last 10 years, however, they have become increasingly alienated from some other Muslim-American associations, who do not consider the movement to be a legitimate representative of “mainstream” American Islam.

Natalia Slain

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### **Nas (1973– )** *rap singer*

Nas is a controversial rap singer whose lyrics and political views have engendered criticism from political leaders and media figures on both the left and the right.

Born on September 14, 1973, Nasir bin Olu Dara Jones, or “Nas,” was raised in the Queensbridge Housing Projects in NEW YORK CITY. His parents were Olu Dara and Fannie Ann Jones. Nasir, which means “helper and protector” in Arabic, spent much of his formative years on the steps of his apartment building listening to his father play JAZZ on his trumpet. By the time his father left his household, relinquishing custody to Nas’s mother, who was a postal employee, Nas had already been deeply influenced by both his father’s musical tastes and religious beliefs. Nas later said that he was also influenced by Michael Jackson, Rick James, Run D.M.C., and three HIP-HOP artists—ERIK B. AND RAKIM, G. Rap, and Kane—who have incorporated Muslim themes into their music.

As a child, Nas was fascinated with the NATION OF ISLAM and the FIVE PERCENTERS, the Nation of Islam breakaway group that was a central force behind East Coast hip-hop. Dropping out of school in the eighth grade, Nas embarked on a program of self-study that included African culture, the Bible, the QUR’AN, and the history of hip-hop. Nas’s music has reflected all of these influences.

His first album, *Illmatic*, was released by Columbia Records in 1994 to the wide acclaim of critics and became known as a classic of hip-hop. His subsequent releases, *It Was Written* (1996), *I am . . .* and *Nastradamus* (1999), *Stillmatic* (2001), *Hip Hop Is Dead* (2006), and the infamously “Untitled” album of 2008, cemented his reputation as a serious, if controversial artist. Nas had planned to call this 2008 album “Nigger,” which incensed numerous African-American leaders such as Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton. Nas dismissed them both as being culturally irrelevant and relics of a former age, but, bowing to the pressures from the music industry, he reluctantly consented to the change. He claimed that he wanted his fans to have access to his message and that they would understand that the “real” title of the album was in fact *Nigger* and not “Untitled,” which is how it was released.

Nas also attracted considerable attention due to his televised dispute with Bill O’Reilly of Fox News, whom he accused of having racist agendas. O’Reilly publicly criticized the decision to allow Nas to perform at the benefit

concert given at Virginia Tech after the tragic shootings there in 2007, condemning violent lyrics in songs such as “Shoot ’Em Up” and “Got Urself a Gun.” During the 2008 presidential campaign, Nas joined forces with the activist groups MoveOn.org and ColorofChange.org and delivered a speech in front of the Fox News headquarters in which he demanded that the network “stop the racist smears on Obama and all black Americans.” This was in direct response to Fox having run a graphic referring to Michele Obama as “Barack’s Baby Mama.”

On January 21, 2009, Nas performed his song “Black President” at Black Entertainment Television’s ball honoring Barack Obama’s inauguration as the 44th president of the United States.

*Nicholas Boeving*

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### **National Basketball Association (NBA)**

The National Basketball Association (NBA) is America’s premier basketball league and one of the most successful professional sports organizations in the United States. Since the 1960s, NBA teams have featured a number of Muslim players. The NBA has welcomed both foreign and African-American Muslim athletes into its ranks, coincidentally introducing the league’s predominantly white, non-Muslim audience to multiple forms of Islamic identity. In this way, the NBA has been a vehicle for Muslim ASSIMILATION into American culture.

The Muslim presence in the NBA began in the mid-1960s, when Mahdi Abdul-Rahman (Walt Hazzard) and Wali Jones (Wally Jones) announced their conversions to Islam. They were followed by Zaid Abdul-Aziz (Don Smith), Shahid Abdul-Alin (Charlie Scott), Jamaal Wilkes (Keith Wilkes), and KAREEM ABDUL-JABBAR (Lew Alcindor) in the 1970s. These conversions reflected a broader trend in black America, which was increasingly turning to Islam as a political and spiritual alternative to Christianity. At a time when other Muslim athletes such as MUHAMMAD ALI and Ahmad Rashad faced public hostility to their religious views, the

NBA's Muslim players reported few incidents of harassment from fans or journalists. Abdul-Jabbar later claimed that his talent protected him from religious criticism.

The NBA gained its first foreign-born Muslim player when the Houston Rockets drafted HAKEEM OLAJUWON of Nigeria in 1984. Olajuwon became more observant as his career progressed, and eventually he became a role model and religious ambassador for Muslim America. For many years he and Abdul-Jabbar presented non-Muslims with a positive view of Islam. The league aggressively marketed both players, and as two of the NBA's biggest stars, they received numerous offers to endorse products and even made appearances in movies and on television.

In 1996, relations between Islam and the NBA were strained when Denver Nuggets guard and Sunni Muslim convert MAHMOUD ABDUL-RAUF refused to stand for "The Star-Spangled Banner," which is played before every NBA game. Abdul-Rauf claimed that Islam forbade worship of any nationalist symbol as a form of idolatry. Fans, journalists, and even fellow Muslims—including Olajuwon—swiftly condemned his act. Abdul-Rauf refused to change his position even when the NBA suspended him indefinitely, prompting the league to offer a compromise that allowed him to pray visibly while the anthem played. He was booed at stadiums around the league and later blamed the incident for ending his NBA career.

Later that year, Craig Hodges, a former player for the Chicago Bulls and a supporter of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), filed suit against the NBA for "blackballing" him "because of his outspoken political nature." During a visit to the White House in 1992, Hodges had presented President George H. W. Bush with a letter asking him to improve the lives of African Americans. Hodges claimed that the NBA had felt embarrassed by the incident and by his affiliation with the NOI and that teams had therefore colluded to keep him out of the league. A Federal court rejected the case.

Despite the Abdul-Rauf and Hodges controversies, the NBA has continued to market a number of Muslim players as role models. Olajuwon and SHAREEF ABDUR-RAHIM represented the United States as members of the 1996 and 2000 Olympic Basketball Teams, respectively. After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, sportswriters and league officials turned to both players for an explanation of Islamic beliefs regarding terrorism. One columnist valorized Olajuwon as "a true face of Islam." While the American media have devoted much attention to Islamic extremism in the 21st century, the NBA, which benefits both economically and culturally from its Muslim players' achievements, has placed Islam in a more favorable light and given players a platform to represent their own understandings of their religion.

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### National Football League

There have been Muslims in the National Football League (NFL) since at least the 1970s. By 2008, approximately 50, or 3 percent, of players in the NFL were Muslim. Though small in number, these players have made an important impact on the history of football, both through their individual professional accomplishments and through their collective efforts to garner recognition for religious diversity in the NFL.

#### MUSLIM PLAYERS

The first prominent Muslim in the NFL was Ahmad Rashad, born Robert Earl Moore on November 19, 1949. A wide receiver, Rashad converted to Islam in 1972 and was the fourth overall draft pick for the St. Louis Cardinals. He played for the Buffalo Bills (1974–76), the Seattle Seahawks (1976), and the Minnesota Vikings (1976–82), earning four Pro-Bowl selections (1978–81). He later became an Emmy Award-winning sportscaster, most notably with NBC. He

also made guest appearances in television sitcoms. Several NFL players have been named after him, including Ahman Rashad Green, a running back for the Houston Texans; Ahmad Rashad Merritt, a wide receiver for the Arizona Cardinals; and Ahmad Rashad Hall, a fullback for the Tennessee Titans.

There have been several other noteworthy Muslim players in the NFL. Ephraim Salaam (1976– ), right and left tackle, was drafted in 1998 by the Atlanta Falcons. He played in Super Bowl XXXIII in 1999 and, since 2009, has been on the Detroit Lions' active roster. In addition to his NFL position, Salaam launched a successful career in the entertainment industry, with multiple television and film appearances, including an NFL advertisement.

Az-Zahir Ali Hakim (1977– ), wide receiver, was drafted in 1998 by the St. Louis Rams. In 2000, he helped the Rams win Super Bowl XXXIV. He joined the Detroit Lions in 2002 and played for several different teams in subsequent years.

In addition, Abdul Raheeda Hodge (1982– ), line-backer, was drafted in the third round of the 2006 league draft by the Green Bay Packers and played for the Cincinnati Bengals. Kareem Brown (1983– ), defensive end, was drafted by the New England Patriots in 2007 and played for the New York Jets. Hamza Muhammad Abdullah (1983– ), special teams and safety, was drafted in 2005 by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and played for the Denver Broncos and the Cleveland Browns. Ahmad Brooks (1984– ), linebacker, was drafted in 2006 for the Cincinnati Bengals and played for the San Francisco 49ers. Antwaan Randle El, who played special teams and wide receiver for the Pittsburgh Steelers and Washington Redskins, had family members who have had connections with the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE OF America, but he himself is a devout Christian.

#### RELIGION AND FOOTBALL

Many Muslims believe in maintaining sound bodies, minds, and morals and value the protection of life; such beliefs and values extend to the realm of professional sports. While many may consider a contact sport such as American football potentially fatal or life-threatening, and thus in conflict with practicing Islam, Muslims are not forbidden from such adventures, according to the SHARI'AH, or Islamic law. If a sport is considered adventurous and safety measures are taken to protect one's life, then there is nothing morally wrong with Muslims playing the sport. Muslims in the NFL generally face the same challenges in integrating their religion into their professional careers that players of any other faith face. Most players keep their beliefs private and personal and do not partake in public displays of their religion beyond an occasional gesture toward the heavens or a prayer circle with their fellow teammates before or after a game.

The NFL has been studiously cautious and discreet when making statements, guidelines, or rules regarding religion. The league has refrained from specifically mentioning any particular religion in its official bylaws and rule books. It has also used secular language when addressing aspects of players' lives that relate to religion, issues that are generally managed by the NFL's Player Development Department. The NFL, like many other professional organizations, has sought to be inclusive and to respect the religious diversity of its players.

In 2003, the NFL amended Section 15.7b of its official rule book, which governs the guidelines for on-field demonstrations of religiosity. The policy stated, "On-field displays of religious expression will be allowed, as long as the following requirements are met: 1. No offensive displays or gestures are allowed, and 2. Representatives of more than one religion must be present, to convey the diversity of the league." Muslims, therefore, are often solicited by Christians (who represent the majority of NFL players) to join their on-field prayer circles before or after games. While some players have expressed discomfort with this policy, it serves to illustrate the caution and discretion the NFL uses concerning religion and in respect of the privacy of its players.

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**Nation of Gods and Earths** See FIVE PERCENTERS.

#### Nation of Islam

The "Lost-Found Nation of Islam in the Wilderness of North America," better known as the Nation of Islam (NOI), was established in 1930 by W. D. FARD, or Farad Muhammad, in DETROIT, MICHIGAN. After WORLD WAR II, it became the best known, and the most controversial, Muslim group in the United States. The NOI was a religious group that had a political impact far beyond its official membership. During the height of the Civil Rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s, it opposed the movement's struggle for racial integration. Instead, it advocated for the establishment of a separate black nation (to be carved out of the Deep South) and for self-defense against both police and mob violence. In the midst of the cold war with the Soviet Union and the war in Vietnam, it urged black Americans not to serve in the military, and it became the predominant domestic voice of Afro-



Asian unity in the face of U.S. and Soviet interference in the affairs of newly independent states of Asia and Africa.

But the NOI was not only a voice of political protest. It also spread a gospel of black pride, extolling the historic achievements of black people from ancient times to the present. It taught self-reliance and encouraged black men and women to obtain an education and establish their own businesses. The NOI was also a bastion of socially conservative ethics and clean living, putting an emphasis on healthy diet, modest dress, sexual propriety, patriarchy, thrift, hard work, discipline, punctuality, and other behaviors generally associated with “family values.” As a religious organization, it established dozens of temples and mosques around the country and helped to spread its version of Islamic religion to thousands of African Americans.

### ORIGINS AND DOCTRINES

NOI founder W. D. Fard, whose ethnic and racial origins are still hotly debated by historians, began the movement in 1930. A peddler of silks and other wares, he told his African-American customers that he was from the Holy City of Mecca and brought them good news of their true identity. They were originally followers of the religion of Islam, he said, and their original language was Arabic, which was stolen from them when they were enslaved and brought to America.

One of his early followers was Elijah Poole, a native of Sandersville, Georgia, who in 1923 migrated, like a million and a half black Southerners between WORLD WAR I and World War II, from the Deep South to the urban North. Poole, who changed his last name first to Karriem and then to Muhammad (after the seventh-century prophet MUHAMMAD), became one of Fard’s most fervent followers. In fact, when Fard mysteriously disappeared in 1934, it was ELIJAH MUHAMMAD who claimed the leadership of the small organization. Muhammad testified that Fard was God-in-the-flesh and that he had been commissioned by God to lead African Americans from their state of mental slavery to the freedom of Islam.

The version of Islam taught by the man known as the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, Messenger of Allah, differed in several important respects from that of most Muslim Americans and other Muslims around the world. No other Muslims believed that W. D. Fard was God, and most others rejected the idea that Elijah Muhammad was a prophet. Though some NOI members used both the QUR’AN and the Bible as sacred scriptures, they read these texts through the revelations of Elijah Muhammad.

Teachings that were unique to the Nation of Islam included explanations of how the world began and how it would end. The NOI’s creation story, called the “Myth of Yacub,” explained that the original people of the Earth were black. Called the Tribe of Shabazz, these original people

inhabited the Holy City of Mecca and ruled the world in peace and righteousness for millions of years until, 6,000 years ago, Yakub, a mad, evil scientist, rebelled and began to genetically engineer the white race, a people who were naturally inclined toward brutality. Using “tricknology,” whites enslaved blacks, and made them “mentally dead, blind, deaf, and dumb” to the truth of their original status as rulers of the earth.

But God, the NOI taught, would not abandon God’s people. Appearing in the person of W. D. Fard in 1930, God appointed Elijah Muhammad to “mentally resurrect” the black man, bring him back to Islam, and rid him of the names of the slave masters. The end of the world was near, according to NOI teachings, and black people needed to prepare for a coming apocalypse in which whites would be eliminated—either they would be killed or their “white” (that is, racist) hearts and minds would be changed.

In this version of Armageddon, which for some members was literal and for other allegorical, a dreadful wheel-shaped spaceship, called the Mother Plane or Mother Ship, would destroy white evil and restore the earthly paradise of blacks. Heaven and hell, according to NOI doctrines, did not exist someplace else; they were states of being on earth, and it was time for blacks to stop enduring so much hell. Beliefs in an unseen God, angels, devils, physical resurrection after death, and the existence of paradise and hellfire were all deemed “spooky.” Although many Muslim Americans and scholars of Islam said that such teachings contradicted the basic tenets of Sunni Islam, the NOI argued that such discrepancies were only a matter of difference in *interpretation* of the message of Islam and that their Messenger, Elijah Muhammad, was uniquely qualified to interpret Islamic traditions.

### GROWTH AFTER WORLD WAR II

The NOI remained a tiny group until the late 1930s and early 1940s when it began to spread from Detroit and Chicago to numerous cities and among incarcerated African Americans. The golden age of the movement can be dated to the early 1950s, when Malcolm Little, who was imprisoned in Massachusetts from 1946 to 1952, declared his allegiance to Islam. After his release, MALCOLM X, as he became known—the X symbolizing the African name lost when his ancestors were enslaved in America—rose through the ranks as an NOI minister in Boston, Harlem, and Philadelphia and became a chief spokesman for and adviser to Elijah Muhammad. Malcolm X was essential to the success of the movement in this era. Though the FBI estimated its membership total at only 5,000 people in 1965, the NOI claimed to have 100,000 members. An independent estimate by historian Claude Clegg has put the number of members at 20,000, though historians are in near unanimous agreement that the political, social, and cultural influence of the organization could be observed far beyond its card-carrying members. The



Members of the Nation of Islam, 1942, attending a hearing in the Chicago Federal Building during World War II in which Department of Justice officials asked for more time to prepare their case of sedition against movement leaders. Elijah Muhammad, the head of the organization, was eventually acquitted of sedition but convicted of draft evasion. (Bettmann/CORBIS)

number of NOI businesses and temples continued to expand even after Malcolm X left in 1964, and by 1975, the NOI had approximately 75 mosques around the country. New converts to the NOI had to study and memorize catechisms attributed to W. D. Fard. Called various titles, including *Actual Facts* and *Student Enrollment*, these catechisms focused on the plight and history of the black people, the “devilishness” of the white man, the mission of W. D. Fard, and various statistics about astronomy, geography, and anatomy (all of which had numerological or hidden meanings). Once the student mastered those lessons, he or she was given an “X” to replace his or her “slave name” or an original Arabic last name. To receive an original name, the convert was required to copy a letter by hand in neat, error-free writing and mail it to Elijah Muhammad. To facilitate identification among Muslims who had the same first name and belonged to the same temple, numbers were prefixed to the X. For example, John Smith,

the first John to convert, became John X; after that, subsequent Johns were given numbers such as John 13X, according to the order of their admittance to the temple.

Once admitted to a local temple or mosque (the movement used both words for their places of worship), the NOI member often participated in activities throughout the week. Members attended Sunday worship services and lectures. Men joined the FRUIT OF ISLAM (FOI), the male auxiliary of the movement charged with protecting members and the temple, among other duties, while women joined the MUSLIM GIRLS TRAINING—GENERAL CIVILIZATION CLASS (MGT), the all female auxiliary that taught home economics and etiquette and organized various mosque activities. Children attended many temple activities and sometimes attended one of the parochial schools that were established alongside the mosque.

Both the FOI and MGT also enforced the strict behavioral rules of the organization, which banned smoking,

dancing, drinking, overeating, gambling, doing drugs, dating, and fornication. FOI and MGT captains also ensured that mosque members were neat, clean, and well groomed. The NOI welcomed all African Americans, including ex-convicts and drug addicts, so long as they abided by these rules. If anyone violated these norms, they would be put on trial and either suspended or expelled from the temple.

MGT and FOI members joined other mosque members in supporting the businesses owned by Elijah Muhammad or established their own markets, salons, restaurants, bakeries, and laundries, often next to the local mosque. In the 1960s, FOI members famously marketed bean pies and the movement newspaper, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, on the streets of black America. Their hard work to meet sales quotas resulted in a weekly circulation of approximately 60,000 copies, making *Muhammad Speaks* one of the most read newspapers among African Americans in that decade. In the 1970s, that same zeal helped members of the FOI and other black males sell millions of dollars worth of imported fish. During this period of expansion for the movement, Elijah Muhammad also purchased a local Chicago bank and farms in Michigan, Alabama, and Georgia, where NOI members worked. When Muhammad died in 1975, his assets were estimated to be worth approximately \$60 million.

#### RADICAL POLITICS IN THE 1960s

Since the 1930s, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) carefully watched Elijah Muhammad and other members of the NOI, fearing that the spread of the movement would result in a violent revolt among African Americans against the U.S. government and white people. But Elijah Muhammad, who had served a federal prison sentence from 1943 to 1946 for refusing to register for the military draft during World War II, never advocated the breaking of other U.S. laws. Muhammad told his followers to observe all other laws and instructed them to focus on self-improvement. Even the fiery Malcolm X was not in favor of violent attacks against white people; he merely said that if white people attacked blacks, they should defend themselves “by any means necessary.”

The NOI was not a terrorist group, but its radical politics and what many considered odd religious teachings about the end of the white race did provoke fear among many white Americans. In 1959, CBS News reporter Mike Wallace introduced the NOI to the public through a series of televised reports entitled “The Hate That Hate Produced.” It was during this period that many Americans came to know the NOI as “Black Muslims,” a term used frequently by journalist Louis Lomax and scholar C. Eric Lincoln to describe the group. Though the NOI disavowed the term, it stuck in the public consciousness and made it seem, incorrectly, as if all African-American Muslims were members of the NOI. During this time, the NOI also came to be widely known as a “black

supremacist” group, which was criticized not only by whites but also by middle-class blacks, including the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his 1963 “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.” Other Muslims, especially many Sunni Muslim Americans, also rejected the group as hateful and un-Islamic.

The movement’s call for racial separation contradicted the aims of many white and black liberals who thought that the enactment of civil rights and voting rights would bring about equality for African Americans. The NOI’s philosophy of black uplift instead echoed generations of African-American leaders from Edward Wilmot Blyden to Marcus Garvey, who had advanced the idea that only black people, creating their own institutions and even countries, could liberate blacks from racist oppression. When the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 failed to deliver racial equality, many advocates of black power adopted the rhetoric of the NOI and especially of Malcolm X—who was assassinated in February 1965—in advocating for black community and local control over every aspect of life that affected African Americans—from schools to food distribution.

But the Islamic identity of the NOI was radical in another way too. During a time when the U.S. government was locked in a struggle with the Soviet Union, the NOI questioned the claims of the U.S. government that it represented the forces of freedom and equality. At the height of the VIETNAM WAR, boxer MUHAMMAD ALI, the heavyweight champion and a follower of the NOI, willingly gave up his title in 1966 rather than serve in the U.S. military.

Even more, Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X, Muhammad Ali, and the men and women of the NOI also rejected Christianity, the religion of most Americans, as a hypocritical tradition that justified slavery and racism. Instead, they associated themselves with Muslims around the world, declaring their allegiance to a faith seen as exotic, foreign, and scary to many Americans. As documented in internal FBI memoranda made available through the Freedom of Information Act, government officials suspected NOI members of disloyalty to the United States. Since black Muslims were not patriots, it was thought, they might be more likely to seek revenge for the injustices that they felt they had suffered. Though the NOI never directly threatened public security, its symbolic resistance to the hypocritical aspects of both U.S. foreign policy and Christian-American racism challenged the interests of the U.S. nation-state and its protectors.

#### AFTER ELIJAH MUHAMMAD

After Elijah Muhammad’s death in 1975, his son, W. D. MOHAMMED, inherited the leadership of the movement and dramatically changed it. Steering the group toward Sunni Islam, he abandoned or reinterpreted many of the unique NOI teachings. The white man was no longer considered



a devil. The demand for a separate state was dropped and the Fruit of Islam was disbanded. U.S. flags were placed in mosques. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad was respected, but the prophet Muhammad of Arabia was affirmed as the last messenger of God. The monthlong dawn-to-sunset fast of Ramadan, which had been observed during Yuletide in the Nation of Islam, was celebrated instead according to the Islamic lunar calendar. The name of the organization was also changed, first from the NOI to the WORLD COMMUNITY OF AL-ISLAM IN THE WEST in 1976, and then to the American Muslim Mission in 1980.

But W. D. Mohammed, who died in 2008, was not the only claimant to the legacy of W. D. Fard and Elijah Muhammad. In 1977 and 1978, Minister LOUIS FARRAKHAN, who replaced Malcolm X as the National Spokesman for the Honorable Elijah Muhammad in the middle 1960s and served in that capacity until 1975, rejected Mohammed's changes. Claiming to represent the original teachings of Elijah Muhammad, he re-formed the Nation of Islam and re-implemented many of the practices of the old NOI. This new version of the NOI published a newspaper, the *Final Call*, which was once again sold on the streets of black America by well-groomed men wearing suits and bow ties. In this new version of the NOI, women rose to greater positions of power than in the old one. Farrakhan's NOI also claimed the mantle of Elijah Muhammad's social and political activism and in 1995 staged a successful MILLION MAN MARCH in Washington, D.C., in which more than 700,000 African-American males pledged themselves to bettering themselves and their communities.

In addition to W. D. Mohammed and Louis Farrakhan, other relatives and students of Elijah Muhammad created new denominations of the NOI. The Lost-Found Nation of Islam was formed in 1977 by Silis Muhammad. In 1978, Minister John Muhammad, Elijah Muhammad's brother, formed a Nation of Islam. Though these organizations have survived, their growth has been small in comparison to the communities led by W. D. Mohammed and Louis Farrakhan.

### CONCLUSION

The NOI has had a profound impact on the history of the United States. Its post-World War II protests against the social injustices faced by African Americans ignited hope, pride, and self-worth in the hearts of hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, including many who never became Muslims. Its 1960s opposition to the Vietnam War and advocacy of black self-determination inspired and anticipated the battle cries of black power advocates such as Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown (JAMIL ABDULLAH AL-AMIN). From the late 1950s until the 1970s and perhaps later, it was the domestic face of Islam with which most Americans were familiar. It popularized Islam in black America. Thousands

of Muslim Americans in the 21st century trace their Islamic lineage through the NOI even if they no longer agree with its teachings or orientation.

Edward E. Curtis IV and Mustafa Khattab

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### Allen 3X, “How Messenger Muhammad’s Dietary Laws Saved My Life” (1971)

*In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Nation of Islam (NOI) came to the attention of most Americans—white, black, or brown—as a radical movement that preached racial separatism, black pride, an unorthodox version of Islamic religion, and the need for black self-determination. But for the thousands of African Americans who became actual members of the organization, it held other, less*



*controversial attractions as well. NOI leader Elijah Muhammad offered his followers a way of life focused on the whole person; he not only outlined a strategy for black political empowerment and religious salvation but also gave practical advice on how to raise children, what kinds of clothes to wear, and how to seek career advancement. Elijah Muhammad's preaching focused a great deal on caring for the body, which he said had been abused, poisoned, and humiliated by white oppressors and blacks themselves. From the beginning of the movement in the 1930s, the NOI stressed the need for a healthy and well-regulated diet, which Muhammad taught would strengthen and purify the body physically and spiritually. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Muhammad published two volumes of a book entitled How to Eat to Live. The advice in those books, many NOI members said, changed their lives for the better. Allen 3X, whose story is recounted below in an article he wrote for the NOI newspaper, Muhammad Speaks, said that these dietary rules saved his life. This very personal account demonstrates how the lives of NOI members often revolved around mundane matters like health and wellness as much as they did around political protest.*



"You will not be sick often if you eat once a day and eat the proper food," states the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, Messenger of Allah, in *How to Eat to Live*, page 27. I bear witness that this is true. Prior to becoming a follower of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, and eating the foods (and the way) he teaches us to eat, I was sick almost daily.

Perhaps I should start at the beginning. As far back as I can remember I suffered from headaches, heartburn and occasionally, hemorrhoids. I accepted them as being normal. I did not know how it felt to have a clear head. I existed on B.C. Stanback, and in later years, Dristan tablets [both of which are pain relievers].

Then in the spring of 1964, the headaches became unbearable. I would take the pills but got little or no relief. One night, while lying in bed restless with a severe headache, something seemed to have burst inside of my head.

The next morning I decided to have my head X-rayed. This was on a Saturday. I was living in Los Angeles at the time.

As I drove around looking for a medical office that was open, I passed Muhammad's Mosque. In the next block I saw a sign that read: X-Ray. I stopped, went in, and asked to see the doctor. Explaining what had happened the night before, I requested an X-ray of my head.

Luckily, this doctor was a chiropractor. After I had finished explaining he began to question me. One of the questions he asked me was concerning the last time excrementation had taken place. I answered that I thought it had been about two weeks. To this, he said, "the problem is not your head." I did not understand and was ready to leave, but I decided to hear him out.

Starting with the nervous system, he began to explain its function: how its branches (nerves) senses pain and pressure throughout the body, these nerves send signals to the head, caused by these signals, causes the head to hurt.

These signals will continue until the pressure is relieved or until the pain subsides. If nothing is done to correct the problem in the affected area, this state of agitation inside of the head, caused by these signals, causes the head to hurt.

He said that this stands true to most headache producing ailments. The problem is rarely in the head. The headache is only a symptom. If the cause is removed the symptom (headache) will disappear.

The headache in my case was caused by pressure due to excess excrement in the colon. This pressure was sensed by the nerves and transmitted to the central nervous system through the spinal cord.

We talked about the hemorrhoids which are caused by straining while constipated. This ruptures the rectal tissue. "Preparation H" and other ointments and suppositories are needed. Fasting relieves the constipation and the hemorrhoids will disappear as the Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us to fast once a month.

The skin rash, he explained, occurs when waste becomes petrified and seeks to be evacuated through the skin.

The last symptom we discussed was of a respiratory nature. Its symptom like asthma, characterized by part of the breathing passage being choked off, causing one to gasp for breath. I had experienced this symptom, but we did not get into a discussion as to the cause. Yet these symptoms have only occurred during periods of constipation.

Then in August of 1964, something wonderful happened. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad came to Los Angeles. He spoke at the Olympic Auditorium August 9. I went to hear him and came in the Nation the following week.

During the processing period, I attended the weekly Orientation classes. There I learned that

Muslims [who follow Elijah Muhammad] eat once a day. So I began this practice at once. At this time I was still making regular visits to the doctor.

After eating once a day for about a week, I noticed that, occasionally, my system worked naturally, with time it kept getting better. After a month or so I was able to stop going to the doctor altogether. This went on for about a year.

Then one week while reading the Honorable Elijah Muhammad's column on "How to Eat to Live" I was struck by something he said about eating one meal a day or one meal every other day. The result was amazing. My system began to work perfectly.

There were other symptoms of relief: my head cleared up and felt light, muscles and joints became limber, and I felt energetic and youthful— younger than I felt anytime in the past.

Though I ate every other day for only four months, I had a glimpse of what it feels like to be sixteen again. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us that in the hereafter we will be like sixteen again.

I eat once a day now, but as long as I stay off pastries and minimize my intake of starches which the Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us are not good for us anyway, unless we live in a frigid zone, I don't have any problems. I no longer need the doctor. If I have a problem, I fast and the problem disappears.

I write this article because I know that many Black people suffer needlessly from many symptoms that could be eliminated by putting into practice what the Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches in *How to Eat to Live*.

This done, they would bear witness as I bear witness that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, the last and greatest Messenger of Allah, is fulfilling that prophecy, attributed to Jesus, wherein it reads: "I am come that ye may have life and life more abundantly."



Source: Allen 3X. "How Messenger Muhammad's Dietary Laws Saved My Life," *Muhammad Speaks*, April 9, 1971, p. 8.

**Native American Muslims** See AMERICAN INDIAN MUSLIMS.

## Native Deen

Native Deen is a HIP-HOP MUSIC group composed of three African-American Muslims whose lyrics focus on Islamic themes. The group's name includes the Arabic word *deen*, which means "religion" or "way of life." Founded in 2000, the group has made frequent appearances at Muslim-American weddings, festivals, conferences, and fund-raisers. Its members, Joshua Salaam, Naeem Muhammad, and Abdul-Malik Ahmad, have collectively produced two albums, *Deen You Know* (2005) and *Not Afraid to Stand Alone* (2007). The group also contributed songs to *Night of Remembrance* (2004) by Yusuf Islam, the former Cat Stevens.

Native Deen has also developed an international following among Muslims. In 2003, it began performing around the world under the auspices of the U.S. State Department, which has viewed its popularity among Muslim Americans as a tool to improve U.S. relations with the Muslim world. On its Web site, the group's members have written that they are not associated with the NATION OF ISLAM or FIVE PERCENTERS, stressing that most AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS are not members of these groups.

## ORIGINS

Group members Joshua Salaam, Naeem Muhammad, and Abdul-Malik Ahmad were all born in the 1970s on the East Coast to parents who had converted to Islam. The three met each other in the late 1980s and 1990s at multiple gatherings of the Muslim Youth of North America (MYNA), a Muslim youth organization, where they performed for their peers as teenage solo artists and contributed to albums for a program called MYNA Raps. They selected their group's name to



One of many Muslim hip-hop artists to emerge in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Native Deen, based in Washington, D.C., is a group that combines its African-American culture and Muslim faith to produce Sunni Islamic music. (*Reuters/HO/Landov*)

promote the Islamic belief that the “deen,” or religion, native to all creation is Islam.

Salaam and Ahmad moved to the Washington, D.C., area as adults. Through its first decade Native Deen performed 30 to 60 times a year, and the members held full-time jobs unrelated to music. Salaam, who served four years in the U.S. Air Force as a police officer, later managed the civil rights division of the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS before accepting a job as youth director at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society, a mosque and Muslim community center in Sterling, Virginia. Muhammad has worked for Islamic Relief, a Muslim charity, and Ahmad has developed multimedia applications for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

### MUSIC AND LYRICS

Native Deen’s music has been classified as Islamic—in contrast to hip-hop performed by Muslims—since it avoids the glorification of sex and violence in its lyrics, seeks to comply with various religious standards in its music, and caters mostly to Muslim-majority audiences. Its recordings have been part of a musical trend in the United States in which religiously inspired groups, including the Christian rock groups Relient K and Switchfoot and the Jewish reggae artist Matisyahu, have promoted religious values while benefiting from the rhythms, sounds, and production quality associated with contemporary popular music.

The group’s musical style is commonly described as a combination of rap, reggae, and rhythm and blues. During live performances, members wear kufis (caps) and loose-fitting clothing and avoid using wind and string instruments, which some Muslims have considered to be religiously taboo. Their songs instead rely on drums and other percussion instruments. They do not play in bars or dance clubs.

Native Deen’s songs have held to religious, cultural, and political themes affecting Muslim Americans. Some have lyrics drawn from ARABIC phrases widely used in Muslim PRAYER. Songs such as “Subhan Allah” and “Sea of Forgiveness” rely on rhythmic chanting and repetition of phrases in Arabic such as *Alhamdulillah* (Praise God), *La ilaha illa Allah* (There is no god but God), and *Muhammadun rasulullah* (Muhammad is the Messenger of God).

The group became better known, however, for its English-language raps with rhyming lyrics designed to inspire religious pride, criticize anti-Muslim DISCRIMINATION, and allege religious profiling by U.S. law enforcement agencies after SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. For example, in a track entitled “M-U-S-L-I-M,” the group chants proudly of the 1-billion-plus world Muslim population. In “Stand Alone,” it sings in praise of a single Muslim mother who braved employment discrimination for wearing her *HIJAB*, or head scarf. In “Still Strong,” the group sings about federal agents banging on a

man’s door, handcuffing him in front of his family, and falsely accusing him of being on a “terrorist list.” In “Intentions,” it examines motives behind good deeds. In “I Am the Deen You Need,” it implores Muslims who have strayed from the faith to return.

### FOREIGN RELATIONS

Shortly after 9/11, the U.S. State Department enlisted Native Deen in its “Shared Values Initiative,” designed to show residents of predominantly Muslim countries that Muslim Americans are largely happy with their lives in the United States. On the group’s first government-sponsored trip in March 2003, it performed in Mali, Senegal, and Nigeria. In 2006, the group performed in London, Turkey, Dubai, Jerusalem, and the Palestinian Territories. In 2007, it traveled to Egypt and Tanzania. The group’s members have said that these trips abroad have promoted tolerance and helped to improve the United States’s image to Muslims around the world by showing that Muslim Americans practice their religion freely.

Jeff Diamant

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**Navy** See UNITED STATES MILITARY.

### Neshat, Shirin (1957– ) artist

One of the most celebrated contemporary visual artists in the United States and around the world, Shirin Neshat has produced photographs, video installations, and films that explore themes related to women, Iran, Islam, tradition and modernity, and the use of space and architecture to think about freedom and constraint, and order and chaos.

Born to an upper-middle-class family in Qazvin, Iran, on March 26, 1957, Neshat had a secular upbringing in Iran, where she also attended a Catholic school. Prior to the 1979 Iranian Revolution, she moved to the United States in 1974 to pursue her education, graduating from University of California, Berkeley, with a B.A., M.A., and M.F.A. in painting in 1983. Upon graduation she moved to NEW YORK CITY, where she worked in several different jobs including at the nonprofit organization Storefront for Art and Architecture.



Artist Shirin Neshat, an Iranian-American artist based in New York City, has used the media of film, photography, and video installations to explore issues related to Islam and women. (Reuters/Corbis)

Inspired by the many post-revolution Iranian women she saw during her return to Iran in the early 1990s, Neshat began a series of photographs entitled *Women of Allah*. This was a personal exploration for her, and she claims the series had the naïveté of someone coming to terms with understanding the new Islamic Republic of Iran and its practice of gender segregation. Using Persian calligraphy, she explored the poetics and politics of the revolution and women's participation in it.

Neshat also began experimenting with FILM, a medium she said was the most complete because it included various other media, from photography to performance and MUSIC. She also said the medium allowed her to become more philosophical, lyrical, and poetic, since photography, through its single and still image, was often confining. Video and film also called people into participating more intimately with her work, according to Neshat. She produced a number of videos and films in the late 1990s, which firmly established Neshat in the New York art scene, and became one of the most sought-after artists in the United States and around the world. Her trilogy, *Turbulent* (1998), *Rapture* (1999), and *Fervor* (2000), followed by a fourth film, *Soliloquy* (2000), have not only been shown around the world but have been the subjects of many academic works on art.

*Tooba* (2003) was the first work that did not include women in veils. Shot in Mexico, *Tooba* was an attempt to think more about the meaning and less about the clichés of the veil. Inspired by the story called *Tooba and the Meaning of the Night* by Iranian novelist and memoirist Shahrnush Parsipur, Neshat's story examined the relationship of women, men, and a blessed tree in the garden of paradise. For Neshat, this work was a way of thinking about the events of

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, and an attempt at bringing back beauty to the world. It was, she said, her most Iranian, Islamic, and universal work.

Several more works inspired by Parsipur's *Women without Men*, an Iranian novel, were made into films by Neshat. All five films of this series, *Mahdokh* (2004), *Zarin* (2005), *Munis* (2008), *Faezeh* (2008), and *Farokh Legha* (2008), were premiered together, first at the AROS Aarhus Kunstmuseum in Denmark from March to May 2008, and then at the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens, Greece, from March to May 2009.

Shirin Neshat has received numerous awards for her work and has exhibited at all the major art fairs around the world, and her solo and group show exhibits number into the hundreds all over the United States, Europe, Asia, and Africa. She was also a featured artist in the Museum of Modern Art's 2006 show in New York called "Without Boundary: Seventeen Ways of Looking," an exhibit on Islam and contemporary art and artists.

Munir Jiwa

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### Newark, New Jersey

Newark, New Jersey, and its surrounding region have played a prominent role in AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM history. NOBLE DREW ALI is widely believed to have founded the Canaanite Temple, a precursor to the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America (MST), in Newark in 1913, though details of the temple's origin and actual relationship to the MST are unclear. Since those days, the forms of Islam most popular in the Newark area have changed markedly every two or three decades. Notably, in the 1960s and 1970s, the membership of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) in Newark ranked among the most active NOI contingents of any city in the United States.

A lack of close ties between Newark's Muslims, who are predominately African-American, and nearby Muslim communities of other ethnicities is indicative of the sometimes racially and ethnically segregated nature of Islam in the United States. Although Newark is located close to South Brunswick and Piscataway, New Jersey, which have thousands of SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, and Paterson



and Jersey City, which have thousands of Palestinian and Egyptian Muslims, the various communities interact very little. The same is true regarding the Newark community's relationship with Muslim communities of New York City, located only 10 miles from Newark. The community life and leadership of Newark's Muslims are largely distinct from those in New York.

#### BEFORE THE NATION OF ISLAM

The organized history of Islam in Newark mainly involves African Americans, though its origins are shrouded in doubt. While some historians have long placed the founding of the Moorish Science Temple in Newark and have often written that the founding of its predecessor, the Canaanite Temple, occurred in 1913, recent scholarship has questioned this claim, noting that historical proof is scant—limited to one secondary source and to the movement itself. The alternate theory is that the Moorish Science Temple was formally founded in 1925 in Chicago. How much the later Moorish Science Temple in Chicago shared with the Canaanite Temple in Newark is yet to be determined. More clear is that the movement did not become a national one until the 1920s and 1930s, when there were 4,000 registered members across New Jersey and Pennsylvania alone.

In 1941, a more Sunni Islamic influence gained a foothold in Newark due to the presence of MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN (ca. 1880–1957), a former leader in the MST, in which he was known as James Lomax Bey. Ezaldeen, like many others in the MST, had gravitated toward Sunni Islam. In 1938, he became the imam of the ADDEYNU ALLAHE UNIVERSAL ARABIC ASSOCIATION (AAUAA), which was incorporated in West Valley, New York. The AAUAA, which claimed its members were of Hamitic heritage—a term deriving from Ham, a son of the biblical Noah—helped to build Islamic communities and teach converts about Islam and the Arabic language. Over the years, it promoted the building of mosques for African-American Muslims in several other states, including Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Florida.

Although Ezaldeen later moved the organization's base to southern New Jersey, both he and the organization remained strong in Newark. Through the 1940s and 1950s, Ezaldeen served as a religious mentor to many converts in Newark. In the 1960s, AAUAA members interacted with both immigrant Muslims from the Middle East and members of the Nation of Islam (NOI). The AAUAA's view that the NOI's position regarding the status of W. D. FARD as God and the status of ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) as a prophet were not proper Islamic views caused occasional tension between the two groups.

After Ezaldeen's death in 1957, another AAUAA leader, Imam Hesham Jaaber, born in North Carolina to Sudanese-American parents, followed him in promoting Sunni Islamic

views to local African Americans. In the 1960s, Jaaber, a well-known figure in local circles, gained recognition and influence beyond Muslim communities in the area. In 1965, at age 34, he presided at the funeral of MALCOLM X (1925–65) in Harlem, braving security concerns related to the circumstances of Malcolm X's assassination. In 1967, wearing the red fez favored by his organization, Jaaber helped law-enforcement authorities control near-riot conditions in Elizabeth, New Jersey. His efforts were lauded by the 1968 report of the Kerner Commission, a federal panel appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to investigate race riots and civil disturbances in the nation's cities the previous year. The report stated that Jaaber drove in a car, bullhorn in hand, as more than 20 of his followers walked the streets trying to keep order. Jaaber died in 2007.

#### THE NATION OF ISLAM'S HEYDAY

The first Nation of Islam mosque in Newark, known as Temple No. 25, opened in 1958 on South Orange Avenue. Its membership and that of its satellite mosques in the area soon gained the reputation within the national organization as being among the most active and loyal, more so than NOI members in some larger cities. Temple No. 25 soon had several affiliated satellite mosques in the area. Many attributed the strength of local sentiment toward the NOI to the leadership of Minister James Shabazz, the imam of Temple No. 25, who preached loyalty to the national organization and whose dynamic preaching style earned him the nickname "Son of Thunder."

Following the organization's dictates of self-respect and economic self-sufficiency, many Newark-area members opened and managed new businesses, such as Steak-n-Take and Whiting H. & G. (headed and gutted) food stores, affiliated with the NOI. Others sold the NOI newspaper, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, and bean pies on the streets. Female members managed family life, and many oversaw home-based businesses. University of Islam schools educated thousands of Newark children. Hundreds, probably thousands, of African Americans in the Newark area adhered to the self-discipline associated with the NOI and left the "street life." Male members of the NOI were known to be more likely than nonmembers in the area to be married.

The violence often associated in the popular imagination with the NOI affected some of Newark's members and also affected the reputation of Temple No. 25. The three men convicted of Malcolm X's assassination in 1965—Talmadge Hayer, Norman 3X Butler, and Thomas 15X Johnson—allegedly had ties to Temple No. 25, as did two other men later named as accomplices by Hayer. And in February 1973, Minister James Shabazz was assassinated in his driveway by four members of a splinter group called the New World of Islam.

### LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In 1975, after the death NOI leader Elijah Muhammad, most NOI members in the Newark area joined the national organizational exodus away from Muhammad's theology. Led by his son, Imam W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), they gravitated toward Sunni Islamic teachings and changed the name of Temple No. 25 to Masjid Mohammed.

Divisions over leadership and theology caused splits, however. Former NOI member Ahmed Burhani, an African American who was defeated in his effort in the mid-1970s to lead Masjid Mohammed, founded the Islamic Center of East Orange in 1980. At first, Burhani recognized the leadership of W. D. Mohammed but later decided to separate from him. Burhani's mosque thrived and by 1982 relocated to larger space.

Two years later, in 1984, another new predominantly African-American mosque with no ties to Mohammed opened in downtown Newark. This mosque, the Islamic Culture Center, was run by an Egyptian immigrant named Osman Ahmed, an engineering professor at Raritan Valley Community College, who persuaded the Muslim owner of a failing commercial building, a Saudi named Ali Habib, to donate space inside for local Muslims unaffiliated with the NOI or Mohammed who needed prayer space. The Islamic Culture Center's close proximity to Newark's busiest commercial centers helped attract large crowds for Friday prayers.

By 2010, there were no fewer than eight mosques in the area that could trace their roots to Temple No. 25. The neighboring towns of East Orange and Irvington joined Newark as relatively large centers for African-American Muslim life. Many mosques in the area remained affiliated with W. D. Mohammed, though their predominance was challenged in the 1990s by mosques associated with SALAFI MUSLIMS, who offered a stricter, more socially conservative version of Sunni Islam.

In 1997, the Islamic Center of East Orange was renamed the Islamic Center of America and relocated to an old armory building. This mosque rejected teachings of both LOUIS FARRAKHAN's Nation of Islam and W. D. Mohammed's community as insufficiently pious and authentic. Predominantly Guyanese and Nigerian mosques also opened in the area, reflecting new immigration patterns. By the first decade of the 21st century, between 10,000 and 20,000 African Americans in the Newark area were practicing Muslims, as were at least a few thousand Latina/os and immigrants from Guyana, the Middle East, and Nigeria. Many former NOI members who had become disaffected from that organization's teachings and who instead frequented Sunni Islamic mosques would still regard the NOI's local history as beneficial, on balance, for the growth of Islam in the area. In all its divergent strands and diverse origins, the Muslim-American community of

Newark, New Jersey, has shaped the history of the city and surrounding area for almost a century.

Jeff Diamant

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### New York City

The first Muslims in New York City may have arrived when it was still New Amsterdam, a 17th-century Dutch colony. Some mixed-race settlers such as Anthony Jansen Van Salee (ca. 1607–1676), one of the largest landowners on Manhattan prior to 1639, may have been Muslim, and it is even more likely that some of the African slaves forcibly brought to New York were followers of Islam. Muslim sailors and freedmen such as ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (ca. 1762–1829) and MAHOMMAH GARDIO BAQUAQUA (ca. 1830–?) visited New York from the colonial era to the 19th century, though the first viable Muslim-American community in the city was likely established in the late 19th century when more than a million Eastern and Southern Europeans as well as Middle Easterners arrived in the United States.

Since then, the Muslim population has grown from a minuscule percentage to a significant minority of New Yorkers. Muslims have become involved in every aspect of life in the United States's largest city. By 2000, approximately 7 percent of the city's 8 million residents, or about 600,000 people, were Muslim, making New York the home of the largest Muslim-American community in the nation. In the first decade of the 21st century, around 102,000 Muslim children were enrolled in New York City public schools, constituting approximately 10 percent of all students. Nearly every type of American Islam has become represented in New York, though many "cultural" Muslim New Yorkers are not observant in their religious practices.

### LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

The most active missionary voices on behalf of Islamic religion in the 19th century were white American converts. Though WHITE MUSLIM AMERICANS have constituted a minority of all Muslim Americans, their relative social privilege has allowed them to establish the institutions and publications necessary to proselytizing on behalf of their faith. ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB, a former U.S. consul to the Philippines and journalist born in the Hudson Valley, was the

most prominent of these persons. After securing the financial support of a Muslim businessman from India, he established the “American Islamic Propaganda” in February 1893. That year Webb penned a book entitled *Islam in America*, published a glossy newspaper called the *Moslem World*, and set up an office in Manhattan.

Webb’s goal was to recruit middle-class white people to the religion, as he explained to the *New York Times*, noting that he did not desire any sort of relationship with the Muslim peddlers and other working-class Muslim immigrants from the Middle East and South Asia who already lived in New York. After falling out with Webb, two other white Muslims, John A. Lant and British immigrant Emin Nabakoff, established a competing group, the First Society for the Study of Islam in America, in December 1893. The split attracted negative attention from the press and from the missions’ foreign Muslim backers, who asked the three men to reconcile. But the fighting continued, and both missions failed by 1894, unable to attract followers or funding. Webb moved to Ulster

Park, New York, and eventually to New Jersey, where he continued to write on behalf of Islam, but seemingly reached few persons with his message.

According to some sources, the next Muslim association to be established in New York City was the American Mohammedan Society in 1907. Lithuanian, Polish, and Russian Muslims who settled in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, likely met and prayed together in each other’s homes or rented space until 1931, when they purchased three buildings on 104, 106, and 108 Powers Street. These Muslims, many of whom were ethnic Tatars, have been perhaps the least studied of all Muslim ethnic groups in New York.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS arrived in New York from 1878 to 1914. Some of them settled in “Little Syria,” located on Washington Street in lower Manhattan, and later in South Ferry, Brooklyn; others used New York only as a point of disembarkation and headed west toward DETROIT, TOLEDO, NORTH DAKOTA, and other locations. By the 1920s, Arab-American Muslims from the



In the 1890s, the largest Syrian immigrant neighborhood in New York City, called the “Mother Colony,” was located on Washington Street in Lower Manhattan. In the first decades of the 20th century, Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn came to rival the Mother Colony as the largest enclave of Arabic-speaking Americans in New York. (Photolibrary)



Druze community had established an Arabic newspaper called *al-Bayan*, located on 391 Fulton Street in Brooklyn, and some others founded a New York chapter of the Young Men's Moslem Association, which took an active interest in UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS, especially concerning the fate of Arabs in Palestine.

SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS began to arrive in the late 19th century as well. Composed largely of male sailors, these Muslims from Bangladesh worked in the British merchant marine, occasionally leaving their ships for good when they docked in New Orleans or New York. Some married African-American and Hispanic women, settled permanently in the United States, and, if allowed by the authorities, became U.S. citizens. Some of them who had settled in New Orleans in the 1890s decided to come north between WORLD WAR I and WORLD WAR II.

These men, who had children with names such as Roheamon, Rostom, and Bahadour, moved to the so-called ghettos of the city, including the Lower East Side of Manhattan, Harlem, or Hell's Kitchen. Ibrahim Choudry, for example, was a resident of Harlem who married a Puerto Rican woman and became director of the British Merchant Sailor's Club for Indian Seamen in 1943. The Indian Seamen's club served Indian FOOD to sailors and allowed Muslims to hold religious ceremonies, including Friday prayers, on premises. Another South Asian Muslim who married a Puerto Rican woman was Habib Ullah, a restaurateur who threw parties that featured both salsa music and Indian food spiced with ingredients purchased at Spanish Harlem's La Marqueta.

Some Muslim immigrants, identifying a potential advantage to their classification by Anglo-Americans as "colored" people, targeted both their businesses and their missionary activities toward black New Yorkers. As foreign affairs columnist for the *Negro World* and head of the African Affairs office of the New York-based Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), Egyptian-born intellectual DUSÉ MOHAMED ALI (1866–1945) actively encouraged African Americans to support the liberation causes of other colonized peoples and explicitly linked the interests of Muslims abroad to African Americans at home.

Though his relationship with the UNIA began and ended abruptly in 1922, his activities in New York were by no means finished. In 1926, he tried to establish an import business to give West African farmers direct access to American markets while also continuing to raise awareness about African and Asian cultures through staged dramas and various publications. Similarly, though Sudanese Muslim missionary SATTI MAJID (1883–1963) began his career in New York by ministering to Yemeni sailors around 1921, he, too, finished his career in the United States as a missionary to a mainly indigent group of African-American Muslims.

Of all immigrant Muslim missionaries, however, the most successful and important in this era was Daoud Ahmed Faisal, a black emigrant from the Caribbean, who in 1939 rented a brownstone at 143 State Street in Brooklyn Heights for his Islamic Mission of America. It would become New York's most successful Sunni Muslim mosque during and after World War II. Interracial and interethnic, this mosque tailored its message for African Americans but invited Muslims from all backgrounds, including diplomats from the United Nations, to attend its prayer services.

#### MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY

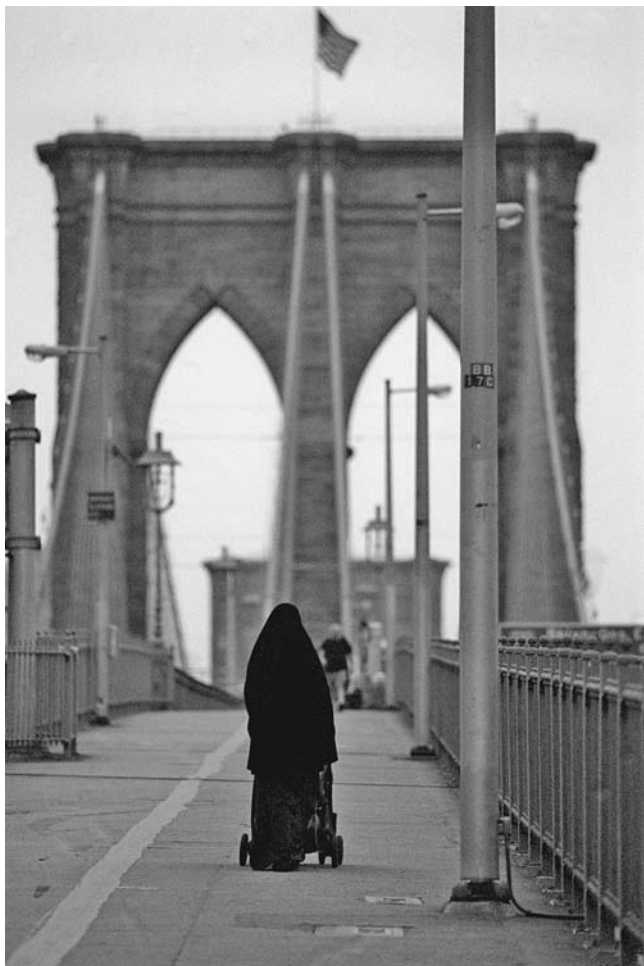
Despite his success, Daoud was not the public face of Islam in New York City. In fact, with the exception of Mohammad Webb, Muslims in the New York area attracted little attention from local media until the 1950s. The emergence of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) as a national movement changed that. In 1946, the NOI opened Temple No. 7 at the Harlem Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) building and received a significant boost in 1954, when the charismatic NOI leader MALCOLM X (1925–65) was named to head the temple.

As the civil rights movement at home and the independence of former colonies abroad coincided in the late 1950s and 1960s, Malcolm X became an important voice in the lively intellectual and political life of Harlem. Noticed first by black New Yorkers, Malcolm X came to the attention of the entire city on April 14, 1957, when he gathered a group of Muslims outside the 123rd Street police station and demanded the release of Hinton Johnson, a black Muslim who had been beaten by the members of the New York police department.

In 1959, Malcolm X became a national figure when WNTA-TV journalist Mike Wallace featured him as a protagonist in an exposé on the NOI called "The Hate That Hate Produced." By the early 1960s, Malcolm X had become a Muslim celebrity in New York. Such coverage only increased when Malcolm famously split from the NOI in a news conference held on March 12, 1964, at the Park Sheraton Hotel, and when he was assassinated in Harlem's Audubon Ballroom on February 21, 1965.

Some Muslim immigrants in New York reached out to more famous Muslims in the NOI, especially Abdul Basit Naeem, a Pakistani entrepreneur whose journal, the *Moslem World*, covered the rise of the NOI and other Muslim groups in the 1950s. Despite the fact that he attended Friday prayers at Faisal's State Street mosque in Brooklyn, Naeem developed strong ties to NOI members, explaining that only differences in interpretations separated Sunni Islam from the NOI. Naeem performed Islamic marriage ceremonies, sold tapestries, books, and handbags, and taught Arabic and Islamic studies in Harlem. His life testified to the fluidity of Muslim cultures in the city as ideas and goods freely circulated among New York's Muslims.





A Muslim woman pushes a stroller along the Brooklyn Bridge in New York City. (Jason Florio/Corbis)

This dynamic environment also fueled the proliferation of many different religious groups among Muslims in New York. In 1963, for example, CLARENCE 13X broke away from the NOI and began to form his own group, the FIVE PERCENTERS. Also called the Nation of Gods and Earths, this group of African Americans called themselves “poor righteous teachers,” an elect group that could unlock the secret meanings of language and numbers. Around the city in the 1970s and 1980s, especially on public basketball courts, Five Percenters popularized their teachings and language among youth—introducing slang such as “G” for God—which greatly influenced the rise of rap and hip-hop during this era. The movement’s founder, who had since come to call himself “Allah,” also established a Five Percent school and worked on violence prevention programs with the administration of New York City mayor John Lindsay.

Sunni Muslim groups also multiplied in this period. In 1967, Khalid Ahmad Tawfiq, an African-American Muslim who had studied at al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, cre-

ated the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood (MIB) in Harlem. The MIB combined Sunni Islamic religious practice with an emphasis on black pride and self-determination. In 1968, other black Sunni Muslims broke away from the State Street mosque and established Darul Islam, or House of Islam, on 240 Sumpter Street in Brooklyn. This movement was utopian, and dreamed of the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth in which the SHARI‘A, or Islamic law and ethics, would be the governing legislation of all humankind.

#### POST-1965 IMMIGRATION

By the late 1960s, Muslim immigrants and visitors had been arriving in New York City for hundreds of years—but in relatively small numbers. That changed after the passage of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, which liberalized the restrictions on immigrants from Africa and Asia. From 1968 until 1997, perhaps 1.1 million Muslim immigrants entered the United States. The result in New York City, which received hundreds of thousands of these immigrants, was that the face of Islam changed.

One new and prominent Muslim was Muhammad Abdul-Rauf, a graduate of al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, and the British School of Oriental and African Studies in London, who became director of the Islamic Center of New York, located on Riverside Drive and 72nd Street. In response to the tensions between Jewish and Muslim New Yorkers in the wake of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Abdul-Rauf initiated interfaith dialogues with Jewish groups. Though Abdul-Rauf moved in five years to Washington, D.C., to serve as the Director of the ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C., his son, FEISAL ABDUL RAUF, remained in New York and, in 1983, became the imam, or religious leader, of a Sufi mosque in lower Manhattan. He, too, supported various INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS in the city and founded his own organization called the ASMA Society, which was later taken over by his wife, Daisy Khan.

New York’s physical landscape was altered as Muslims built a number of new mosques. In Queens, Pakistani Muslims built the Islamic Center of Corona on 42-12 National Street in 1983 and the Muslim Center of New York on 137-64 Geranium Avenue in 1991. In Manhattan, Muslims finished in 1991 what is likely the most prominent mosque in New York, the Islamic Cultural Center at Third Avenue and 96th Street. By the end of the 20th century, researchers for Columbia University’s “Muslim in New York City” project, funded by the Ford Foundation, estimated that there were 140 Muslim places of worship in the city. Their architectural styles ranged from grand mosques to rented halls and converted storefronts.

Muslims also changed the city’s look by participating in that most obvious sign of communal and ethnic arrival in New York: the staging of an annual parade. Beginning in

1986, the Muslim World Day Parade transformed the intersection of Lexington Avenue and 33rd Street into an outdoor mosque, where parade participants would prostrate themselves on sheets of plastic in the direction of the Ka'ba, Islam's most sacred shrine, in Mecca. Marching south down Lexington toward 23rd Street, participants carried banners with messages about God, the prophet MUHAMMAD, and the QUR'AN as they passed by Muslim-owned stores that sold South Asian food and DRESS. Floats in the parade included models of the Ka'ba, the grand mosque surrounding the Ka'ba, and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.

The parade drew from a population of Muslim New Yorkers that was becoming increasingly diverse. By the end of the 20th century, nearly two-thirds of all Muslims in New York were immigrants, reflecting larger DEMOGRAPHIC patterns in the Muslim-American population as a whole. More than 35 different ethnic groups, speaking dozens of languages, were represented in New York's Muslim community. Muslims in New York came from sub-Saharan Africa, all parts of Asia and Europe, and from Latin America. Large Arab-American Muslim communities lived around Atlantic Avenue, Bay Ridge, Crown Heights, and Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn and around Jerome Avenue and the Grand Concourse in the Bronx. South Asian-American Muslims were more concentrated in Queens, largely in Flushing and Jamaica, which was headquarters of the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA (ICNA), a national Muslim-American organization run primarily by South Asians that began in 1974.

Beginning in the 1970s, it was impossible for non-Muslim New Yorkers to avoid daily, if casual contact with Muslims. Bangladeshi and other Muslims became known for driving the city's taxicabs. Muslim street vendors offered passersby HALAL, or religiously permissible, hot dogs and falafel sandwiches, and West African-Muslim immigrants developed networks of salesmen who hawked inexpensive knockoffs of watches and other luxury items. In Manhattan's financial district, Muslims became prominent investment bankers. Hundreds of Muslims served in the New York police and fire departments.

Though this era was dominated by immigrants, African-American Muslims remained some of the city's most prominent Muslim faces. South Asian immigrants associated with ICNA helped to fight drug use and engaged in community uplift efforts in neighborhoods around Brooklyn's Masjid al-Taqwa, or "Mosque of God-Consciousness," but the leader of the effort was an African-American Sunni, SIRAJ WAHHAJ (1950– ). In legal circles, SHEILA ABDUS-SALAAM, a graduate of both Barnard College and Columbia University School of Law, steadily climbed from her position as staff attorney at Brooklyn's Legal Services office in the late 1970s to her eventual election as New York Supreme Court Justice in 1993.

### IN THE AGE OF TERROR AND ANXIETY

But no matter how central Muslims had become to the life of the city in the late 20th century, their lives remained fraught with tension as they despaired over terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center (WTC), first in 1993 and then again on SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. On February 26, 1993, five Muslim extremists attempted to blow up the WTC. Although the buildings withstood the attack, the explosion killed six people and injured more than 1,000. Additional plots against city landmarks such as United Nations headquarters, 26 Federal Plaza, the George Washington Bridge, and the Lincoln and Holland tunnels had been planned by the conspirators, a group led by Egyptian preacher OMAR ABDEL-RAHMAN, a veteran of the U.S.-backed military campaign against the Soviet army in Afghanistan who came to live and work in New York and New Jersey in the early 1990s.

Though the association of Muslims with terrorism led to several incidents of anti-Muslim discrimination in the city after the 1993 bombing, the situation of Muslim New Yorkers became even more precarious after the 2001 attacks against the WTC, which led to the death of more than 2,700 people, great economic hardship, and personal tragedy. Despite the fact that Muslims were among those killed in these attacks and among the first-responders on the scene, hate crimes against Muslims rose nationally 1,700 percent, according to the FBI. At the same time, many Muslim and non-Muslim New Yorkers reached out to one another, holding an unprecedented number of interfaith meetings.

For example, New Yorkers Ranya Idibly, Suzanne Oliver, and Priscilla Warner—a Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew, respectively—tried to write an interfaith children's book in response to the tragedy but ended up having extended and extremely difficult conversations about the religious and political issues that separated them. Instead of producing a book for children, they wrote a memoir about their dialogues called *The Faith Club* (2006), which became a *New York Times* best seller and inspired women and men across the country to begin their own interfaith dialogues.

The 9/11 attacks also inspired more Muslim New Yorkers to enter law enforcement and especially counterterrorism. Even as many Muslim-American leaders, civil liberties advocates, and regular citizens questioned the law enforcement techniques used in the wake of 9/11, many Muslim-American New Yorkers volunteered to lead such efforts. Disregarding the policy of many federal intelligence agencies that restricts the hiring of foreign-born agents, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) recruited hundreds of foreign-born officers for a thousand-person counterterrorism and intelligence unit. Many of these officers were native speakers of Arabic, Urdu, and other languages in which terrorists have communicated. By 2006, while the FBI had only 33 agents



The annual American Muslim World Day Parade in New York City became a popular event in the late 20th century. (David Grossman/*Alamy*)

with “some proficiency” in Arabic, the NYPD had more than 65 fluent speakers of Arabic.

The NYPD used these intelligence capabilities to conduct undercover operations among various terrorism suspects and engaged in controversial sting operations, which led some observers to criticize the department for exaggerating threats and even encouraging the terrorist plots. Before the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York, for example, the department exposed a plot to bomb the Herald Square subway station. A Muslim undercover officer from Bay Ridge in Brooklyn provided evidence against the two plotters who some said were incompetent and only half serious in their intent to go through with the attack. Whether New Yorkers viewed these particular arrests as a success or failure, it helped to illustrate the advantage or perhaps the necessity of involving the city’s large Muslim population in the struggle against terrorism.

#### CONCLUSION

In 2008, the Empire State Building, the tallest and one of the most recognizable buildings in New York and a symbol of the

entire city, commemorated Eid al-Fitr, the HOLIDAY marking the end of the monthlong Ramadan fast from dawn to sunset, by turning its tower lights green, the color most associated with Islam. A few New Yorkers protested the decision by writing letters to various officials, but many welcomed the move, especially Muslim-American leader Daisy Khan, who saw the lights as she was walking down a New York street with her family. “I cannot tell you how grateful and how proud I am to be an American Muslim,” she wrote to the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*.

Such public recognition also marked the changing nature of Muslims’ historical presence in New York City. While Muslim New Yorkers were an oddity until the 20th century, in the past century they have made an indelible mark on the city. By the 1950s, African-American Muslims and Muslim immigrants established important ethnic enclaves in Harlem and in Brooklyn. After 1965, Muslim Americans came to inhabit all five boroughs of the city and participated in every aspect of its life. They helped to make New York City one of the most dynamic international crossroads in the United States.

Edward E. Curtis IV



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### Daoud Ahmed Faisal

#### *Al-Islam: The Religion of Humanity* (1950)

In 1939, Shaikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal (1891–1980), the founder of the Islamic Mission of America, leased a brownstone for his burgeoning Muslim community on 143 State Street in Brooklyn. By the 1950s and 1960s, he was one of New York's most prominent Sunni Muslim leaders. An African-American convert to Sunni Islam, Faisal ministered to Muslims from every part of the globe, including foreign visitors, businessmen, students, and some United Nations officials. His Islamic school, the Institute of Islam, offered daily classes on Islamic studies and Arabic, and hundreds came to pray each Friday at his mosque. An uncompromising missionary, Faisal exhorted all people to convert to Islam, which he believed was the one, true religion. In his 1950 book, *Al-Islam: The Religion of Humanity*, from which an excerpt is reproduced below, he criticized the post–World War II emphasis among American politi-

cians and religious leaders on interfaith dialogue. For the sake of their own salvation, he wrote, Jews and Christians should convert to Islam.



For the assurance of everlasting *Peace and Security*, the people and the nations of the world, must accept "Al-Islam," the *Religion of humanity*, revealed by "Allah," the "Almighty God," unto His chosen Prophets, as the *Religion of humanity* in which to worship Him as their *Religion*. And they must also adopt and put in execution its Principles and its Laws as revealed by "Allah," the Lord of the worlds, unto His Holy Apostle Mohammed, for the one world government of the *brotherhood* of all humanity, as decreed by God, so that all men shall worship and be of one *God*, one *Religion* and one *Law*.

*For The Benefit Of Humanity*, "Al-Islam" is the Religion of the Peace of God, the Reward or the Attributes of obedience to the Commandments and the Laws of "Allah," the "Almighty God." "Al-Islam" is the *Religion of humanity*. It is the reward the gift from "Allah" to all who bowed down their will in *submission* to the (*Will*) of "Allah," the (one) God, in obedience to His Laws, His Commandments, His Prophets and what He hath revealed for the government and guidance of humanity, and as the Religion and the *Faith* in which to worship Him.

All the people and the nations of the world should know that "*Islam*," the *Religion* of "Allah," the "Almighty God" is the *only* Religion of humanity. They should also know that "*Islam*" is the Religion of all the *Prophets* and *Messengers* of God, including Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, the Tribes, Moses, David, Jesus and Mohammed, and the Prophets of God were not Jews but *Muslims*. No one has Religion, and neither can any one worship God, unless he bows down his will in submission to the (*Will*) of "Allah," the "Almighty God," the Lord of the worlds, in obedience to His Laws, His Commandments, His Prophets and what He hath revealed for the benefit of humanity.

The Islamic Mission of America, Mosque and Institute, established in the name of "Allah," the "Almighty God" according to His own Divine revealed laws in the promotion of the highest human interest in the worship of "Allah," the (one) true God, designed especially for the propagation, teaching and defending "Al-Islam," the Religion of humanity, which "Allah," the Lord of the worlds,



hath revealed unto His Chosen Prophets, as the Religion and the Faith in which all humanity shall worship Him. It appears to me as though the people of the Western parts of this world have no knowledge of the Religion of their Lord. Their constant *laughing* and *mocking* the *Muslims'* manner of worshipping God clearly proves this, because it is only fools who laugh and mock at things of which they have no knowledge. They have never been made to know that prostration is the proper manner of worshipping God. Prostration signifies humility and meekness of oneself before his or her creator. Muslims are the true believers who have never deviated in the slightest degree from "Islam," the Religion of God and His Prophets and mankind. We are in strict accordance and obedience with the laws of our Lord as revealed and as prescribed by His Holy Prophets.

It is deceiving and shameful on the part of the leaders of the Jews, the Catholics and the Protestants, to proclaim the so-called three Faiths at a time like this, to an enlightened and troubled world, to people who are seeking for the truth, peace, security and the brotherhood of man.

Faith is to believe in the oneness of God, obedience to His Commandments, His Laws, His Prophets and what He hath revealed. All who believe in the oneness of God, Who created the universe, His commandments and His Laws are of (one) Faith. The Jews know better because their religion is of the religion of Abraham. They are only leading the Christians on who are using the books of Moses, the law giver, and, a prophet of the Israelites. This is no way to establish brotherhood. Human brotherhood is a reality, because we are one human family. The brotherhood of man must be established in obedience to the Commandments and the laws of the (one) God of Abraham, which is a different thing all together. "Islam," our religion, mine and yours, is the Religion of humanity. The so-called three Faiths must find a different name for unification. But to call yourselves the three faiths when you believe in the one and the same God is deception in the highest degree. The Jews must return to "Islam," the religion of Abraham, and the Christians must accept "Islam," the Religion of humanity; that is if they hope to bring about peace and the one universal brotherhood of man.

It is my desire that the Christian people should know that I am not an enemy of theirs, but a friend of humanity, a lover of truth and human-

ity, and a herald of the truth as revealed by the "Almighty God." And should you find knowledge, guidance, peace, the blessings and the forgiveness of God through the pages of this book then I will have accomplished more than my object. I beg of you to read this book very carefully and then make a fair comparison of what you read and what you have been taught to believe. However, there are certain things you must know in relationship with your God before you die.

Christianity is not your Religion, and it is not the Religion of God, and it has no relationship with God, because its teachings and its philosophy are contrary to the revelations and the laws of the Almighty God and the teachings of His Holy Prophets. But "Islam" is your Religion, and unless you surrender your will to the WILL of "Allah," the Unity in the one God, in obedience to His commandments and His laws and observe the teachings of His Prophets, which will automatically make you a Muslim, the gates of Heaven and Paradise will be closed to you, because none goes to Heaven but Muslims who observe the Commandments and the Laws of their Lord.

We are asking the Christian people to stop making fools of themselves, because it is only fools who laugh and mock at things of which they have no knowledge. Why laugh at the Muslims, when the Muslims are the only true believers whose Religion has always been the Religion of God and His Prophets. The religious laws, habits and culture of the Muslims are in true accord with the revealed laws of God.



Source: Daoud Ahmed Faisal *Al-Islam: The Religion of Humanity*. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Islamic Mission of America, 1950, pp. 14–17.

### Nimatullahi Sufi Order

The Nimatullahi Sufi Order is a Muslim mystical association from Iran with an established presence in the United States. Originally founded in the early 15th century by the mystic and poet Shah Ni'matullah Wali, the Nimatullahi Sufi Order in the United States refers to Khaniqahi Nimatullahi, a registered charity and religious association that until 2008 was under the direction of the Iranian psychiatrist and Sufi master Javad Nurbakhsh, known also as Nur 'Ali Shah Kermani. Born in Kerman, Iran, on December 10, 1926, he became master of the order at the age of 27. An energetic and intellectually imposing figure, Nurbakhsh obtained an M.D. in 1952,

pursued advanced medical studies in France, and eventually became professor and head of the Department of Psychiatry at the Tehran University School of Medicine and director of a nearby teaching hospital. He retired from medicine in 1977.

During his years in Iran, Nurbakhsh divided his time between his medical duties and his responsibilities as head of a Sufi order, expanding the presence of the Nimatullahi brotherhood throughout the country through building projects and a vigorous publications program. At the insistence of American disciples who had first met him in Tehran in the early 1970s, he visited the United States in 1974. In the following year, the first two American Nimatullahi Centers, or *khanaqahs*, were established in San Francisco and New York. Others quickly followed. Forced to flee Iran at the onset of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Nurbakhsh lived in Los Angeles for a time and, in 1983, settled in London. In the early 1990s, he purchased a manor in the English countryside where he established the Nimatullahi Research Center. He spent the remainder of his life there, directing the affairs of the order, writing, and receiving disciples and visitors up until his death on October 10, 2008. In the years leading up to his death, his son, Alireza Nurbakhsh, had progressively taken on more responsibility for running the affairs of the order. With his father's death, he assumed the position of its master.

The Nimatullahi Sufi Order maintains centers throughout the United States, including NEW YORK CITY, Washington, D.C., BOSTON, CHICAGO, Santa Fe, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz, and San Diego. Centers have also been established in Canada, Europe, West Africa, and Australia. In 2006, worldwide membership outside of Iran was estimated at 3,600. In the United States, the order's membership is generally composed of a mixture of Iranian expatriates and WHITE MUSLIM-AMERICAN converts. Members gather twice-weekly for meditational exercises led by a designated representative of Nurbakhsh. Individual centers are run as registered self-financing charities and normally have a full-time resident caretaker. Although the historical Nimatullahi Order is associated with Shi'a Islam, this association is not always explicit in the public face of Nurbakhsh's Khanaqahi Nimatullahi. Strict adherence to Islamic ritual and legal norms is not required of members.

A prolific compiler, author, and well-known editor of medieval Sufi texts, Javad Nurbakhsh and his order have pursued a vigorous publishing program under the auspices of the order's publishing house, Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications, which has offices in both New York and London. In addition to scores of volumes comprised of translated compilations of classical Sufi literature and essays and other writings by Nurbakhsh himself, since 1989, it has also published a journal entitled *Sufi*. Issued in both English- and Persian-language versions, this periodical includes scholarly

essays, short fiction, book reviews, and translations from classical Sufi literature, as well as original artwork and poetry.

Erik S. Ohlander

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### Noor, Queen (Lisa Halaby) (1951– ) *Queen of Jordan*

Queen Noor was born Lisa Halaby on August 23, 1951, in Washington, D.C. Queen Noor's father, Arab-American Najeeb Halaby, was a successful attorney who led several organizations and worked under President John F. Kennedy as the director of the Federal Aviation Administration. Lisa Halaby lived a privileged life and attended numerous private schools. She was a member of the first coed class at Princeton University in 1969. After receiving a degree in architecture and urban planning, Halaby took a job with an architectural firm and worked in Europe, Australia, and the Middle East. As part of her work, she traveled to Jordan to meet her father, who was working with King Hussein on an aviation project. Najeeb Halaby talked his daughter into staying in Jordan, and during this period, she began a secret courtship with King Hussein.

The courtship between the 26-year-old Lisa Halaby and the 42-year-old King Hussein was brief and private. Their engagement lasted only a few months. Lisa Halaby married King Hussein ibn Talal on June 15, 1978, in a private ceremony at Zaharan Palace, in Amman, making her the king's fourth wife and stepmother to his eight children. (The king's former wives were either deceased or lived away from the palace when Halaby and King Hussein married.) The king gave his bride the name Noor al Hussein, ARABIC for "light of Hussein." He also gave her the title of queen, and she became known as Queen Noor.

A Christian, Queen Noor took the *shahada*, the Islamic profession of faith, not long before she and the king married. Queen Noor gave birth to four children, two boys and two girls. Prince Hamzah, born in 1980, is the eldest son of Queen Noor and King Hussein. A year later, 1981, Prince Hashim was born. In 1983 Queen Noor gave birth to her first daughter, Princess Iman. In 1986 the king and queen had their fourth child, Princess Raiyah.

The queen directed several development projects throughout Jordan and worked for improvements in education. A supporter of microeconomic development, she promoted Jordanian goods such as Palestinian *jalabas* by wearing them herself and used her clout to provide Jordanian women with seed money to start handicraft projects. Noor was also instrumental in the founding of the Jerash Festival, which brought musical artists from around the world to perform in Jerash, one of the world's best preserved ancient Roman cities. Noor also promoted programs to disable land mines and supported efforts to establish peace in the Middle East. Finally, she spoke out in favor of increased women's rights in Jordan and, during the Islamic month of Ramadan, challenged a taboo by holding *iftar* dinners—the daily meal after sundown during Ramadan—for women.

Queen Noor's husband died of cancer in 1999, and his eldest son, Abdullah II, the son of Hussein's British wife, Tony Gardiner, became the king of Jordan in 1999. Abdullah II named Queen Noor's oldest son, Prince Hamzah, Crown Prince in 1999, but in 2004 removed him from the line of succession. Though Queen Noor still possesses the title of queen, she no longer lives in Jordan and, as of 2010, spends most of her days outside her adopted country.

Britney J. McMahan

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### North Dakota

On a percentage basis, North Dakota was perhaps the largest Muslim-American enclave in the United States in the early 20th century. From the late 19th century until 1930, North Dakota became home to approximately 2,000 Syrian and Lebanese immigrants. Of those 2,000, an estimated 500 were Muslims. This was unusual, since, generally speaking, Muslims constituted only 10 percent of this wave of Arab-American immigration.

The first Syrian Muslim settlers reached North Dakota by the 1890s. The flow of Muslim settlers increased from 1900 to the 1930s as a continued stream of immigrants reached

North Dakota from the Levant through intermediary locations such as NEW YORK CITY and Montreal. Their presence encouraged further settlement by friends, family members, and fellow villagers from the home country to immigrate to North Dakota.

It is estimated that 35 to 40 percent of Syrian applicants for citizenship in North Dakota from 1899 to 1917 were Muslims. Syrian Muslim settlement was widespread throughout the state, usually as part of a homesteading or peddling enterprise. However, larger settlements clustered around Ross and Williston in the central and western areas of the state. As the 1920s and 1930s progressed, the trend toward a denser population pattern increased as many homesteaders migrated into more urban areas of the state.

One of the largest Muslim populations in the state was in the town of Ross. The Muslim settlement in Ross is the best example of the chain migration process. The first Muslim men were present in the Ross area in 1900 or 1901. According to the records of the Federal Land Office, by 1909 at least 66 men filed for land claims in the Ross area. What was initially a small Muslim settlement swiftly grew. By 1910, the census estimated that there were more than 100 Muslim settlers in the area. These settlers retained their traditional religion by meeting in informal home settings.

By 1920, the community established a Muslim cemetery whose 22 existing gravestones include Arabic inscriptions and Islamic symbols. Guest imams, or religious leaders, from the Canadian cities of Edmonton, Calgary, and Swift Current were sometimes invited to perform the Muslim prayer service for the dead. By 1929, the Ross Muslim community had begun construction on a mosque. Built with a large basement to withstand the harsh winters of North Dakota, the simple post-and-beam building looked nothing like the mosques of the Middle East. It rose only a few feet above ground. Called a *jima*, or religious gathering place, by Muslims in Ross, it was known as the Mohammedan church by Ross's Christian populations.

The Muslim community in Ross declined in the 1930s during the economic collapse of the Great Depression. Many farmers, both Muslim and non-Muslim, were forced to sell their livestock to the government for reduced prices. This out-migration of the population during the 1930s continued in the 1940s as North Dakotans more generally answered the call to work in war-related industries and serve in WORLD WAR II. After the 1940s, the mosque was seldom used and was dismantled in 1979.

Works Progress Administration (WPA) records provide a human context for the larger story of immigration and survival on the North Dakota plain in the early 20th century. These records suggest that Muslims in North Dakota did not have a fear of religious prejudice or feel a need to conceal their religious faith at this time. In one interview with

Muslim immigrant and homesteader Mary Juma in 1939, Juma told her interviewer that her “religion in the old country was Moslem. We attended church every Friday, just as we do now.” In another interview with the WPA, Kassam Rameden related a similar experience. He told his interviewer in 1939 that “we attended the Mohammedan Church and we had church every day.”

The existence of a larger Muslim community aided immigrants in their efforts to retain the religious and cultural traditions of their homelands. Adherence to some Islamic religious practices, such as prostrating oneself to pray, no doubt set the Muslims apart from their Christian neighbors. But other Islamic religious traditions would have blended in with Christian practices at the time. Since early 20th century North Dakota was a dry state where the consumption of alcohol was illegal, for example, the fact that Muslims refused to drink did not make them any different from the majority of Protestant Christians who also practiced prohibition. Muslims fasted and used prayer beads—like the state’s many Roman Catholics. The fact that Muslims butchered their own meat in accordance with Islamic DIETARY LAWS would not have been strange in this agrarian state.

In their interviews with the WPA Writers’ Project in 1938 and 1939, Muslim respondents were unanimous in their appreciation for their neighbors’ acceptance of them. In his interview, Allay Omar of Ross wrote that “all the people in my neighborhood were very friendly, and they helped me whenever they could.” Joe Albert of Williston reported a similar experience in his interview: “When I first came, everyone helped me all they could—more friendly here than in the old country.” The experiences of Allay Omar and Joe Albert indicate that the Muslim populations of North Dakota assimilated into the fabric of North Dakota society as equals with other immigrant groups.

Patrick Callaway

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### WPA Interview with Mary Juma (1939)

*In the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration employed writers in a national program to gather information on the vanishing ethnic cultures of immigrants who had arrived in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Arab-American Muslims in North Dakota who were interviewed noted the differences between their lives in Lebanon and Syria and their lives on the American prairie. One of those interviewed was Mary Juma, a Syrian American who settled in the United States in 1901. In the excerpt below, fieldworker Everal J. McKinnon offers a summary*

*of his interview with Juma, which took place on the Juma farm in Ross, North Dakota, in 1939.*



I was born in Byria, Rushia, Syria. I don’t know my exact age, but according to my naturalization papers, I am sixty-nine years old. I am sure that I am at least seventy-five years of age, however.

My home in Syria was a large, one-story, stone house. The floors were made of logs (about the size of our telephone poles), and the space between the poles was filled with smaller poles. Branches were used to fill small unfilled parts. A mixture of wet clay and lime was spread over the poles and branches, packed in hard, and smoothed by running a heavy roller over the floor. This was allowed to dry, and the result was a hard floor looking like cement. The roof was made in the same way.

Our village was located in a valley, and the land surrounding the village was level, extending two miles on each side of a river meeting rougher and more rolling land.

My religion in the Old Country was Moslem. We attended services every Friday, the same as we do here.

I received no education, as our people figured that it was a waste of time and money to teach a girl to read and write. There were no schools in our village, and those that were taught to read and write, were taught by a tutor.

Being a woman, I knew nothing about labor conditions, wages, renting, taxes, nor about farming methods. I know that everything was done the hard way. We didn’t have machinery to farm, and used oxen on a walking plow. Seeding, harvesting, and threshing was done by hand.

Parties were given only to celebrate such an occasion as a wedding. The kind of party given would depend on the financial condition of the family giving it. If the people were well-off, they would prepare for many and invite the people from the nearby villages, and there would be much feasting and dancing. The table was set all the time and people ate whenever they felt like it. When dancing, everyone dance alone, not in couples. There was one dance where many joined hands and danced in a circle, a great deal like our square dances here. These parties for days sometimes.

A wedding in the Old Country was just the same as a Moslem wedding anywhere. There



is no courting before the wedding. When a boy decides to marry a certain girl, he goes to her parents and tells them about it. If he is not of age, he tells his own mother and she goes to see the girl's parents.

They then have a private discussion as to whether or not they should marry. The girl is not consulted at all. She, in most cases, is but a young miss of only eleven or twelve years of age. The outcome of the decision depends on the financial status of the prospective groom. An agreed amount of money is to be put aside by the groom in case of a separation. The separation must not be culminated through the fault of the bride if she is to receive that dowry. This amount varies. After the preliminary agreements are made, the date of the wedding is set. If the family of the groom is wealthy, the people from all the neighboring villages are invited to the ceremony and a feast is prepared. The bride names two witnesses for the ceremony, and then all is ready. The bride goes to an enclosure away from the ceremony and her father acts in her place. He clasps the hand of the groom and a handkerchief is draped over the clasped hands, and thus the vows are exchanged. After the ceremony, the feasting and celebrating begins.

My husband's farm was very small. I don't know the number of acres, but it wasn't enough for us to but barely exist on. The people in our vicinity were migrating to America and kept writing back about the riches in America. Everyone wanted to move and we were a family of the many that contemplated leaving. We sold all our possessions and borrowed two-hundred dollars from a man, giving our land as a collateral.

A big farewell party was given in our honor, as there were twelve of us coming to America from that one village. It was a sad farewell as our relatives hated to see us leave. We feasted, danced, and played games at the party. The games were for men, which were feats of strength and endurance.

We left two daughters in the Old Country with relatives. One of the girls has died since, and the other one still lives there.

We went to Beirut, which was about thirty miles from our home, and caught a boat to France. It took us about three weeks to travel through France. I do not remember the name of the boat we took from there to America. It took us three weeks to come from France to Montreal, Canada.

We moved further inland and started to travel over that country with a horse and cart as peddlers. We stayed there only a few months, and then moved to Nebraska, in the United States. We traveled through the entire state in a year. We never had trouble making people understand what we wanted while peddling, but many times we were refused a place to sleep. We suffered the same conditions as the pioneers, and at times were even more uncomfortable.

We were in Canada in 1900, and in Nebraska in 1901. In 1902, we came to western North Dakota where we started to peddle. It was at the time when there was such an influx of people to take homesteads, and for no reason at all, we decided to try homesteading too.

We started clearing the land immediately, and within a year, had a horse, plow, disk, drag, and drill. We also had some cattle and chickens. When there was a very little work to do on the farm, my husband traveled to Minnesota and eastern North Dakota to peddle.

In 1903, my son, Charles, was born. He was the first Syrian child born in western North Dakota. We were the first Syrians to homestead in this community, but soon many people from that country came to settle here.

Our home has always been a gathering place for the Syrian folk. Not many parties or celebrations were held, except for occasions like a wedding or such. Before we built our church [mosque], we held services at the different homes. We have a month of fasting, after which everyone visits the home of another, and there was a lot of feasting.

I am pretty old now, and am confined to this wheel-chair because of my leg which was amputated two years ago. I miss my work, both indoor and outdoor, but still enjoy life.

We were always able to make a very good living by farming and raising livestock, until the death of my husband in February of 1918. My son then took over the management of the farm, and I have lived with his family since. The depression has made living hard, but I don't worry.

Charles went to school in Ross until my husband died, and was not able to even complete the eighth grade.

We always speak in our native tongue at home, except my grand-children who won't speak Syrian to their parents. They do speak in Syrian to me because I cannot speak nor understand English. My grand-children range from fourteen

months of age to eight years, and there are four of them. . . .

I can't read at all, neither in English nor Syrian. My son and daughter-in-law tell me the news they think might interest me.

We don't have any recreation; we only work. Sometimes friends stop in to talk for awhile, and then we attend services every Friday too, but that is all. I sew a little occasionally, and like to hold the baby. . . .

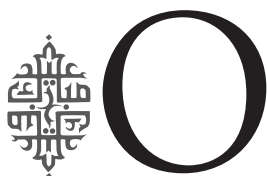
There is too great a comparison to say much about America and my native land. This country has everything, and we have freedom. When we pay taxes, we get schools, roads, and an efficiency in the government. In the Old Country, we paid

taxes and Turkey took all the money, and Syria receiving nothing in return. We were repaid by having Turkey force our boys to join her army. The climate in the Old Country was wonderful, but we [Americans] have such a climate down south.

If I had my life to live over, I would come to America sooner than I did. I would have liked to visit the people in Syria five or ten years ago, but now that I am helpless, I wouldn't care to go. I don't ever want to go back there to live.



*Source:* Works Progress Administration. North Dakota Writers' Project Ethnic Group Files, Series 30559, Roll 3, 1939.



**Olajuwon, Hakeem (Akeem) (1963– )**  
*professional basketball player*

Hakeem Olajuwon is a former professional basketball player who spent 18 seasons with the Houston Rockets (1984–2001) and Toronto Raptors (2001–02) of the National Basketball Association (NBA). He received the league's Most Valuable Player Award in 1994, won consecutive championships with the Rockets in 1994 and 1995, and was named one of the NBA's 50 Greatest Players of all time in 1997. His on-court success and public devotion to Islam have made him a role model to young Muslims worldwide. Since retiring in 2002, he has become known for his charitable work and efforts to build an Islamic community in Houston.

Olajuwon was born Akeem Abdul Olajuwon in Lagos, Nigeria, on January 21, 1963, to a Muslim family of the Yoruba tribe. Though his parents were observant Muslims, Hakeem recalls that they did not pressure their children to practice Islam. The young Olajuwon was exceptionally tall—at age 15, he already stood six feet nine inches—but did not play basketball until a coach convinced him to try “the American game.” Less than four years after shooting his first basket, he left Nigeria to pursue an athletic scholarship in the United States.

Olajuwon began his American career at the University of Houston. After starting on the practice team, he progressed well enough to become the Cougars' top center. In 1984, the media honored him as a first-team All-American, placing “Akeem the Dream” among the nation's best college players. Houston reached the championship game of the Final Four in both 1983 and 1984, losing twice. Following the second defeat, the Houston Rockets selected Olajuwon with the first overall pick in the 1984 NBA draft. He became the first foreign-born player in the NBA.

As his career blossomed, Olajuwon became more religiously observant. He had long been wary of getting caught up in black nationalist Muslim groups—more specifically the NATION OF ISLAM, whose teachings he considered un-Islamic—but in 1990 he started attending prayers when he learned of a Sunni mosque located near the Rockets' arena. “When they made the call to prayer, there were goose bumps

all over me,” he later recalled. “It was so emotional to hear that call again. I was like, wow, look what I've been missing!” To symbolize his newfound devotion, he added an “H” to his first name, making it similar to the ARABIC term for “all-wise.” The following year he performed the hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca.

Olajuwon spoke openly about his faith and committed himself to charity work and the establishment of a Muslim community in Houston. He also began taking Arabic lessons during his off-season trips to Nigeria and Jordan. Though teammates resisted his attempts to convert them, they claimed to respect his beliefs. For the remainder of his career, he strictly observed the Ramadan fast, even when bouts of weakness hindered his play—a situation the *Houston Chronicle* called “unfortunate” but “honorable.”

Shortly after Olajuwon's rededication to Islam, the Rockets emerged as one of the league's elite teams. In 1994, Houston won a franchise-record 58 games and its first NBA championship, capping a season in which Olajuwon became the first and only player to win the Most Valuable Player Award, Defensive Player of the Year Award, and NBA Finals Most Valuable Player Award in the same year. The Rockets repeated as champions the following season. Though Olajuwon continued to be one of the league's best players for several more years—he received numerous All-Star and All-NBA selections and won a Gold Medal as a member of the 1996 United States Olympic Basketball Team—his abilities faded toward the end of the 1990s. He played his final season with the Toronto Raptors before retiring in 2002.

Since leaving basketball, Olajuwon has become a fixture in America's Muslim community. He has made appearances before the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA and the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION and has served as a spokesman for charitable causes, especially those relating to education. His own charity, the Dream Foundation, has awarded college scholarships to Houston-area students since 1995. He has also refused to promote products he sees as un-Islamic or immoral.

These efforts have made him the public face of Islam for many non-Muslim Americans. In 1996, when fellow Muslim

and Denver Nuggets star MAHMOUD ABDUL-RAUF refused to stand for the national anthem on religious grounds, Olajuwon questioned his understanding of Islam and told reporters that "to be a good Muslim is to be a good citizen." After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, he called on the media to treat Muslims fairly. "The Muslims in America are now the face of the crime and that fulfills the stereotype," he said. "It puts us in a very bad position, all the way back to almost the beginning, to having to explain to a country where we are still in the great minority that the actions of a few cannot be allowed to represent all Muslims."

Olajuwon's Islamic activism has drawn much praise, but also some scrutiny. In February 2005, the U.S. Treasury Department discovered that he had raised money for two relief agencies suspected of funding al-Qaeda and Hamas, the Palestinian political party. Olajuwon denied any knowledge of the ties and expressed regret that his donations may have indirectly supported terrorist organizations. Federal officials chose not to investigate him.

In the first decade of the 21st century, Olajuwon developed a highly successful real estate business in Houston while also spending time with his wife, Dalia Asafi, and their two daughters. He was elected to the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2008.

William Brown

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### O'Lone v. Estate of Shabazz (1987)

In 1987, the United States Supreme Court heard the case *O'Lone v. Estate of Shabazz*. Although the case was originally brought by a prison inmate named Ahmad Uthman Shabazz, he died on January 15, 1986, so the case was brought to the Supreme Court by his estate. This case came about after Muslim prisoners at New Jersey's Leesburg State Prison brought suit against Edward O'Lone, administrator of the Leesburg prison complex, arguing that newly instituted prison policies violated their rights to freedom of religion under the Free Exercise clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The policies required the inmates to leave the prison grounds during the day for work detail and also prohibited them from returning to the grounds during work hours. This meant that Muslim inmates assigned to these details were unable to attend Friday congregational prayers, which many Muslims understand to be religiously incumbent.

Leesburg State Prison had three custody classifications for inmates: maximum security, gang minimum security, and full minimum security. Maximum and gang minimum inmates were held in the main building, whereas full minimum prisoners were held in a separate building, known as "the Farm." In April 1983, the state instituted a policy that barred the movement of prisoners directly from maximum security to the Farm without first spending time housed under the middle classification. This resulted in an overwhelming number of inmates grouped under the two higher classifications and therefore overpopulation of the main prison building. In order to deal with the large number of prisoners, some were assigned to work outside the main building during the day, during which time eight to 15 inmates were supervised by one guard. This meant that if one inmate needed to return to the main building, then every member of the detail also had to return.

When the new work policy was first instituted, some Muslim inmates were permitted to work in the main building on Fridays so that they could attend congregational prayers, but this exception was eliminated in March 1984,



and all gang minimum inmates were required to work outside the main building Monday through Friday. Muslim inmates asked that exceptions be made, but prison officials maintained that this would be too costly and would cause security risks. The prisoners proposed that inmates who wanted to attend Friday services be placed in all-Muslim work details so that they could all return for prayer. Prison officials argued that having inmates return during the day caused a security problem because all traffic in and out of the prison had to be put on hold while they were searched and processed. Officials were also concerned that creating work groups based on religious affiliation would create the appearance of favoritism.

The inmates also suggested that they be permitted to work outside of the main building on the weekend and remain in the building on Fridays. Again, officials argued that this would make problematic distinctions among various prison groups and that the cost of having increased security on the weekend made this option unreasonable. They also maintained that in order to rehabilitate prisoners and ready them for life in the outside world, where they would be expected to complete full workdays, they should not be released from their work assignments. For these reasons, no exceptions were made.

When the prisoners first brought suit in March 1984, the U.S. district court in New Jersey found that there was no violation of the prisoners' rights, holding that prohibiting inmates from returning during the day was valid in order to advance security and rehabilitation. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit overturned this decision. The circuit court held that the district court's decision did not adequately protect prisoners' rights to practice their religion, concluding that inmates' rights could be limited only if there was no reasonable alternative that could be instituted without causing a serious security risk. The court of appeals also held that the risk as described by prison officials was not sufficient to warrant limiting inmates' religious rights.

It was after the district court decision was reversed by the court of appeals that the Supreme Court heard the case and, in a 5–4 decision, overturned the Third Circuit's ruling. The opinion of the court was written by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, who was joined by Justices Byron White, Lewis F. Powell, Sandra Day O'Connor, and Antonin Scalia. Justice William J. Brennan authored the dissenting opinion, in which Justices Thurgood Marshall, Harry A. Blackmun, and John Paul Stevens joined.

The majority of the Court explained that its ruling was based on a balancing of two principles. The first was that inmates did not forfeit their First Amendment rights when they were incarcerated. The second, however, which was the guiding principle in the majority's decision, was that impris-

onment necessarily results in the limitation of rights and privileges. The court drew on an earlier decision, *Turner v. Safley* (1987), which held that prison officials had the right to anticipate security problems and limit inmates' rights as they saw necessary in order to avoid these problems. The *Turner* case also concluded that the courts should limit their role in evaluating the validity of the actions taken by prison officials in these situations.

Relying on the precedent articulated in *Turner*, the Court decided in *O'Lone v. Estate of Shabazz* that the court of appeals had erroneously placed the burden of proof on prison officials to show that there were no available alternatives that they could take in order to allow the prisoners to participate in Friday congregational prayers. The Court also held that the court of appeals should have accepted the assessment of prison officials and placed the burden of proof on the inmates who were arguing for an exception to be made. In a non-prison setting, when dealing with issues of religious freedom, the burden of proof is placed on the person or institution that is attempting to limit individuals' religious freedoms. By allowing prison officials to limit the inmates' religious rights, however, the Supreme Court concluded that when dealing with prisoners the burden should be placed on the petitioner. The Court also determined that because Muslims were not barred from participating in all Muslim religious practices, their rights were not being limited enough to warrant a change.

The dissenting opinion argued that the burden of proving the need for restricting the right to free exercise should remain on the prison officials, and they should be required to show that allowing prisoners to participate in Friday congregational prayers presented a valid security risk and that there was no reasonable way to allow them to participate in this religious practice.

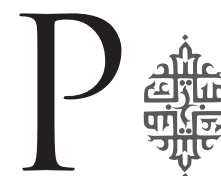
Although the *O'Lone* decision made it easier for prison officials to limit the religious rights of inmates by requiring only that the prison's interest be "legitimate" in order to outweigh a prisoner's right to the free exercise of religion, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) of 1998, a federal law, required a "compelling" interest on behalf of the government or prison officials in order to limit inmates' practice. As a result of RFRA, the Supreme Court's decision in *O'Lone* was effectively nullified, and the First Amendment rights of prisoners were expanded.

Monica C. Reed

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**Padilla, José (Abdullah al-Muhajir) (1970– )**  
*“dirty bomb” suspect*

José Padilla, a convert to Islam and of Puerto Rican descent, was publicly accused by U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft in 2002 of plotting to detonate a radioactive “dirty bomb” in CHICAGO. He ultimately faced charges that did not mention a dirty bomb. A U.S. citizen, Padilla was transferred on June 9, 2002, a month after his arrest, to a Navy brig where he spent the next three years and seven months as an “enemy combatant.” Convicted on August 16, 2007, of federal charges of conspiracy to murder, kidnap, and maim people in a foreign country, conspiracy to provide material support for terrorism, and providing material support for terrorists, he was sentenced on January 22, 2008, to 17 years and four months in federal prison. Critics of the U.S. government’s response to the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, view his case as representative of other post-9/11 cases in which the government has made highly publicized terrorism accusations against individuals but ends up negotiating plea bargains or winning convictions for crimes of lesser magnitude.

Born on October 18, 1970, in Brooklyn, New York, Padilla grew up in Chicago, where his family attended a Pentecostal church. As a teenager, he joined a gang and spent several years in juvenile detention after participating in a robbery that turned into a homicide. At age 19, he moved to Florida with his mother. Around 1993, he converted to Islam after he and his girlfriend, Cherie Stultz, who would become his first wife, became friendly with their Muslim boss at a fast-food restaurant in Davie, Florida, where they both worked. According to his relatives and his lawyers, in 1998 he moved to Egypt, hoping to teach English and eventually become an imam, or religious leader, and in 2000, after making the pilgrimage to Mecca, he moved to Yemen and traveled to Pakistan to continue his studies. In Egypt, Padilla met a woman named Shamia’a, who became his second wife. (Stultz then filed for divorce.) Padilla has three sons: Hussein and Hassan, both with Shamia’a; and Joshua, with a woman he had known as a teenager in Chicago.

The U.S. government believed he was closely associated with al-Qaeda and met with senior members of that orga-

nization. Padilla was arrested on May 8, 2002, after arriving at O’Hare International Airport in Chicago from Islamabad, Pakistan. The government contended that Padilla was evasive with FBI interrogators about his time in the Middle East and that in 2000 he filled out an application form for an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan.

The manner of his detention was a major point of contention. Shortly after Padilla’s arrest he was transferred to military confinement at the Naval Weapons Station in Charleston, South Carolina, where the government kept him for three years and seven months as an “enemy combatant”—a status that allowed the administration to detain him indefinitely. Padilla eventually sued, seeking the right to challenge his detention in a U.S. court.

On February 28, 2005, he was ordered released by District Judge Henry F. Floyd of the U.S. district court in South Carolina, but on September 9, 2005, the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit, reversed that decision, saying Padilla could indeed be held as an “enemy combatant” without a charge. On November 22, 2005, shortly before the U.S. Supreme Court was expected to consider the manner in which he was detained, the government indicted Padilla on federal charges, paving the way for his transfer on January 3, 2006, to a federal prison in Miami, Florida, from the Navy brig.

In Padilla’s three-month trial in the federal court system, the main piece of evidence against him was a form that prosecutors said was an application he had signed in 2000 to go to the training camp in Afghanistan. The application had his fingerprints on it, which Padilla’s attorneys argued could have come from the defendant’s handling of it while in custody. The government also claimed that they had recordings of Padilla talking with two codefendants, Adham Hassoun and Kifah Jayyousi, in allegedly coded conversations about planned terrorist acts, though Padilla participated in only a small minority of the recorded conversations. On August 22, 2007, a jury convicted him. During the sentencing phase of his trial, prosecutors tried unsuccessfully to include as evidence what they said was an al-Qaeda “graduation list” with Padilla’s Muslim name on it. The judge questioned the form’s validity and the prosecution’s timing.

Details of Padilla's federal crimes remained unclear even after his conviction. His trial included no mention of a dirty bomb, despite Ashcroft's public statements of 2002. The government had said its information linking Padilla to a dirty bomb plot stemmed from interrogations of terrorism suspects overseas, but federal rules of evidence placed heavy restrictions on how such information could be used in court. In sentencing Padilla on January 22, 2008, to 17 years and four months, rather than to life in prison as the government wanted, U.S. District Judge Marcia Cooke said she considered the "harsh" conditions Padilla faced in the Navy brig. She also said she considered the fact that no evidence connected him to actual acts of terrorism or any plot to overthrow the U.S. government.

Critics of the government's handling of Padilla have argued that his original transfer to military custody owed less to specific circumstances of his case than to government frustrations in prosecuting terrorism cases through the court system. While federal authorities have claimed that battling terrorism in the public forum of a courtroom can hurt national security if sensitive evidence becomes public and confidentiality of informants is compromised, critics have answered that the convictions in Padilla's case showed that at least some terrorism suspects can be successfully prosecuted in the court system.

Jeff Diamant

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**PATRIOT Act** See USA PATRIOT ACT.

#### Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, played an important role in the growth of Islam in the United States throughout the 20th century. Like CLEVELAND, OHIO, it was one of the cities where Sunni Islam took root early among African Americans. In combination with other groups such as the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America and the NATION OF ISLAM, these groups helped to make Philadelphia one of the most religiously diverse Muslim cities in the United States by the middle of the 20th century. That diversity only increased after the passage of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, as tens of thousands of Muslim immigrants from Asia and Africa came to make Philadelphia their new American home. By the 21st century, these immigrants, in combination with the large population of African-American Muslims, likely meant that Philadelphia became home to more than 100,000 Muslim Americans.

#### MAJOR AMERICAN ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS SINCE THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

While the existence of Muslims in Philadelphia dates to the colonial era, when thousands of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES were transported to North America, there is scant documentation about the activities of such persons in the city. The story of Muslims in Philadelphia becomes clearer in the early 20th century, when African Americans in Philadelphia began to practice various forms of Islam, the growth of which eventually resulted in an entire street, Lancaster Avenue, becoming known as Philadelphia's Muslim Main Street.

Like other northern cities, Philadelphia became one of the destinations for the migration of 1.5 million southern black migrants who left the south between WORLD WAR I and WORLD WAR II. The "Great Migration," as it is called by many historians, resulted in an unprecedented period of religious and cultural activity among African Americans. Older religious institutions such as the Baptist and Methodist churches benefited from the influx of new residents, and new religious movements, including Muslim groups, also developed in this environment. Black religious institutions, no matter what their particular religious outlook, tended to address the whole person, offering economic, political, and social resources as well as religious doctrines and practices to people who were still the victims of legal and extralegal discrimination.

One of the new religious movements to take root in Philadelphia was the Moorish Science Temple (MST), founded in CHICAGO in 1925. Located at North Fifth Street, the Philadelphia chapter of the MST grew during the 1930s and 1940s. Though NOBLE DREW ALI, the founder of the movement, died in 1929, he remained the focus of the group's religious practices in the 1930s, when anthropologist Arthur Huff Fauset conducted research on the Philadelphia chapter for his groundbreaking *Black Gods of the Metropolis* (1944).

The only scholar to leave a detailed record of Moorish religious practice in this era, Fauset described Friday evening prayer services as quiet and contemplative. Though members did not sing lustily, they softly chanted a hymn called "Moslem's That Old Time Religion," using the tune of the Christian hymn, "Give Me That Old Time Religion." They recited parts of *The Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America*, a book published in 1927 by Ali and considered to be religious revelation by members. A male leader, often dressed in a fez or a turban, told them about the significance of their national origins in Morocco, the religion of Islam, and their great Asiatic (Asian) history in Canaan, Egypt, and North Africa. Participants then stretched out their arms in a salute and prayed: "Allah, Father of the Universe, the father of Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom, and Justice. Allah is my protec-

tor, my Guide, and my Salvation by night and by day, through His Holy Prophet, Drew Ali. Amen.”

The Moorish Science Temple was not the only Muslim movement to become popular among African Americans in Philadelphia in this period. One of the unusual aspects of Muslim history in Philadelphia was the role the city played in spreading Sunni Islam among African Americans before 1945. The ADDEYNU ALLAHE UNIVERSAL ARABIC ASSOCIATION (AAUAA), formally established in 1938 in New York and New Jersey, quickly developed a presence in Philadelphia. Like the MST, the AAUAA taught that African Americans had an ethnic and racial connection to Islam (traced through the biblical figure of Ham). But unlike the MST, the AAUAA espoused a Sunni orientation. Founder MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN (1886–1957) lived in Philadelphia, and though it is not clear when, a chapter of AAUAA was founded there sometime in the late 1930s or early 1940s.

In 1943, Philadelphia also hosted what was one of the first national meetings of African-American Sunni Muslim groups in history. On August 18, Ezaldeen joined other leaders, including Cleveland’s WALI AKRAM (1904–94) and Daoud Ahmed Faisal of NEW YORK CITY, to discuss their common goals and interests. The four-day meeting resulted in the formation of the Uniting Islamic Societies of America, an umbrella group that was supposed to further the coordination that had been initiated at the conference, but that effectively disbanded by 1946. Despite this national organization’s lack of success, its mere formation indicated the extent to which Sunni Islam was growing among African Americans and also likely had ripples among Philadelphia’s AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS.

After World War II, Philadelphia saw the growth of still more Muslim groups. In addition to a local chapter of the Ahmadi Muslims, one of the first successful Muslim missionary groups among black Americans, the NATION OF ISLAM established a strong presence in Philadelphia. In 1954, MALCOLM X (1925–65), the foremost activist in the movement, came to Philadelphia to organize Temple No. 12, which later operated from 1319 West Susquehanna Avenue in North Philadelphia. The permanent leader appointed to lead the temple was W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), the son of NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975). Mohammed, unlike many other ministers in the NOI, incorporated several teachings from the QUR’AN into his speeches and classes, anticipating the increased incorporation of Sunni Islamic texts and symbols among the NOI’s intelligentsia in the 1960s and 1970s.

One sign of the temple’s successful growth in Philadelphia was its hosting of two visits by Elijah Muhammad in 1960 and 1963, when thousands of people in Philadelphia gathered at 45th and Market Street to hear him speak. In the 1970s, five other temples opened in the city, referred to as Temple No.

12B, 12C, 12D, 12E, and 12F, with the headquarters being the temple on Susquehanna Avenue. In the 1970s, NOI members became known by Philadelphia’s mainstream press for their economic and civic activities—both legal and illegal. On the one hand, the NOI staged highly successful three-day Muslim bazaars that offered tens of thousands Philadelphians the chance to purchase and exchange goods, see live performances, eat food, and hear political and religious speeches. In 1976, a year after W. D. Mohammed took over the NOI, local Muslims also opened a Sister CLARA MUHAMMAD School, a parochial school serving Muslim and non-Muslim children. On the other hand, some NOI members became known as the “black mafia,” accused of dealing illegal drugs and shaking down merchants for protection money.

### MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS AFTER 1965

One of the earliest Muslim immigrants in Philadelphia was Mohamed Ahmad, who arrived in Philadelphia from Palestine in 1908. Later, in the 1950s, he brought his son, family, cousins, and friends, who in turn established their own extended kinship network of Palestinians in Philadelphia. Such immigration was not unusual, though again, little is known about the activities of these early immigrants. After the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, the presence and visibility of immigrant Muslims increased in Philadelphia.

Foremost among these immigrant Muslims was Imam Hatip Jemali, a pioneering leader who arrived in 1957 as a political exile from Yugoslavia, where he once served as a mayor of a small town near the Albanian border. Later obtaining U.S. citizenship, he brought his family to the United States in 1966. In 1974, he founded a mosque at 157 West Girard Avenue in order to meet the religious and cultural needs of the growing Muslim immigrant population. Gradually, the mosque became a center of the immigrant Muslim community and an important part of the national Albanian-American Muslim Society.

In 1986, Philadelphia’s Muslim community was traumatized by the brutal murder of Muslim-American leader and Temple University professor Ismail al-Faruqi and his wife, Lamyia, in their Cheltenham home. A leading figure in the establishment of several prominent Muslim-American institutions, including the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT (IIIT), and an advocate of Palestinian nationalism, al-Faruqi had been warned by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) just a week before that his life may have been in danger due to his anti-Zionist politics. As rumors about the involvement of persons linked to the Jewish Defense League (JDL) in the murders spread among Arabs and Muslims in Philadelphia, the FBI said that the murders were the result of a botched robbery. More than 4,000 people attended al-Faruqi’s funeral, held at Masjid Muhammad in West Philadelphia. The murders of al-Faruqi and his wife



also led to a congressional hearing on hate crimes and terrorism waged against Muslims and Arab Americans.

In the face of this tragedy, many ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS in Philadelphia adopted a two-tiered approach to their lives: attempting to preserve their communal solidarity while also reaching out to fellow residents of Philadelphia through civic engagement and interfaith dialogue. In 1989, Palestinian and other Arab-American Muslims built the Al-Aqsa Mosque at 1501 Germantown Avenue. Conducting prayers and sermons in ARABIC, the mosque has catered largely to first-generation Arab Americans. It has also attempted to develop outreach to other religious groups. By the beginning of the 21st century, participants in its Friday congregational PRAYER services numbered as many as 1,000 men, women, and children. The mosque also operated an Islamic bookstore, a Muslim grocery, and the Al-Aqsa Society, which worked to preserve the cultural and religious identity of Arab-American Muslims. In addition, it operated the Al-Aqsa Islamic Academy, a school with about 300 students in kindergarten through 12th grade.

The new wave of immigration after 1965 also led to the formation of Sufi communities in Philadelphia, including the BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN FELLOWSHIP. Sufi teacher M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen arrived from Sri Lanka in 1971 and taught about Sufi practices such as *DHIKR*, the ritual remembrance of God, in the city until his death in 1986. In 1973, followers met at 5820 Overbrook Avenue; then in 1984, the Mosque of Sheikh M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen was built in the same area. By the beginning of the 21st century, the group was estimated to have approximately 1,000 members and extended its reach from Philadelphia to other cities in the United States and abroad.

In addition, Philadelphia has become a home to the GÜLEN MOVEMENT, a Sufi-oriented group that emphasizes self-improvement and service. Led by Fethullah Gülen, who moved to the Pocono Mountains in northeastern Pennsylvania in 1999, the movement has established several organizations in Philadelphia, including the Philadelphia Dialogue Forum located at 700 Townshipline in Havertown, a suburb of Philadelphia approximately nine miles from the city center. Established in 2003, the forum maintains a membership consisting of hundreds of Turkish Muslim-American immigrants and students and offers activities such as an annual Ramadan interfaith dinner and interfaith trips to Turkey in order to foster dialogue between people of different faiths and backgrounds.

#### AFTER 9/11

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, hate crimes and DISCRIMINATION against Muslim Americans in Philadelphia increased. In 2007, a local hotel worker was sentenced to eight months in a halfway house for writing a threatening note to her Arab-American boss

that referenced the 9/11 attacks and said, "You and your kids will pay." The Philadelphia Police Department and the local office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation responded to increased threats by assisting the Al-Aqsa mosque and other Muslim institutions in increasing their security. When the so-called Fort Dix Six, all of whom lived and worked in or around Philadelphia, were arrested in 2007 for conspiring to kill U.S. soldiers at Fort Dix Army base in New Jersey, Philadelphia's Muslims worried about a potential backlash against them. Local Muslim leaders said that they had never seen the suspects and assured non-Muslims that intolerant and violent interpretations of Islam were unwelcome in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia's Muslims continued to reach out in the midst of these threats. In 2004, they organized the Interfaith Peace Walk in coordination with local religious leaders Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb and Imam Abdul Rauf Campus-Marquetti. In 2007, about 3,000 Muslims gathered to share their history, FOOD, and MUSIC during the annual Islamic Heritage Festival at Penn's Landing. The Al-Aqsa mosque has also served as an Election Day polling site and has hosted a number of forums for candidates for the Philadelphia City Council.

From its beginnings as a site for the early growth of Islam among African Americans to its more contemporary position as one of the largest and fastest growing Muslim cities in the country, Philadelphia has long been a site of Muslim diversity. Even when living in communities divided along racial and ethnic lines, Muslims in Philadelphia have sustained public lives that are deeply intertwined with those of non-Muslim residents. In business, EDUCATION, PHILANTHROPY, and other areas, Muslims in Philadelphia have contributed to the pluralistic spirit that is embodied in the city of brotherly love.

Heon C. Kim and Edward E. Curtis IV

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## philanthropy

Philanthropy has always been an important component of Muslim life, both in the United States and abroad. The very notion of giving is enshrined in the Islamic notion of *zakat*, a pillar of Islamic practice that requires Muslims to give a portion of their wealth to worthy causes. From the moment that AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES arrived on American shores in the 16th and 17th centuries, Muslim Americans have contributed their energy and resources toward philanthropic endeavors in the Western Hemisphere. But the nature of Muslim-American philanthropy has changed dramatically since the colonial era. In the 20th century, Muslim-American philanthropy focused on a variety of activities. Muslim Americans contributed large sums of money and their own labor toward the building of MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS, ISLAMIC SCHOOLS, and national organizations geared primarily toward serving the interests of the Muslim community. They also supported non-Muslim philanthropic organizations and developed social service institutions and charities that served Muslims and non-Muslims alike. In many ways, the Muslim-American experience, like the American experience overall, can be understood only through a close examination of its philanthropic elements. Philanthropy is an inextricable part of U.S. and Muslim-American history, since it has often been the object of people's greatest passions and voluntary commitments.

### SLAVE TIMES

While philanthropy is generally understood to be a voluntary activity, the forced enslavement of Africans, including Muslims, is an important exception to this rule. Against their will, African-American slaves grew crops, tended animals, and contributed other forms of labor to the economic development first of American colonies and then to the United States. They also contributed to the success of the U.S. economy through the sharing of technical knowledge, teaching their owners and overseers how to cultivate rice or make dyes, for example. In addition, slaves themselves became chattel, a piece of property that was bought and sold, significantly increasing the net wealth of thousands of Americans who benefited from their purchase and sale.

Beyond this forced philanthropy, however, Muslim-American slaves practiced philanthropy as it is more com-

monly understood, voluntarily sharing their goods and labor with one another. The descendants of Muslim slaves on Sea Island, Georgia, recalled stories of their parents and grandparents about the celebration of certain West African holidays among the Muslim and non-Muslim slaves. During harvest festivals, African-American women would prepare sweet rice cakes called *saraka* or perhaps *sadaka*, an Islamic charitable gift that is not obligatory but is laudatory. One woman recalled that her grandmother would wash the rice to remove the starch, and then soak the rice in water overnight. She would then beat it into a paste, and add honey or sugar, forming this mixture into cakes. As the grandmother called the children to a table to partake of the sweets, she would bless the food by saying, "Ameen, Ameen, Ameen," using the Arabic word for Amen.

In addition to serving one another through philanthropic activity, Muslim-American slaves were occasionally the beneficiaries of white philanthropy. The African-American Muslim slave community included several literate and highly educated Muslim scholars and students from West Africa who attracted the attention of slave owners, Christian missionaries, and journalists. For example, between 1731 and 1733, the Arabic letters of American slave JOB BEN SOLOMON, also known as Hyuba Boon Salumena Jallo, somehow came into the possession of James Oglethorpe, founder of the Georgia colony and a member of British Parliament. Oglethorpe purchased Job's bond, brought him to England, and toured him around British aristocratic circles. Job was eventually freed and offered a job for the Royal African Company in West Africa.

But perhaps the most successful fund-raiser among African-American Muslim slaves was ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA, who raised thousands of dollars to purchase the freedom not only of his wife but also of his eight children. Setting out on a national fund-raising tour in 1828, Ibrahima met some of the nation's most prominent white and black citizens during his tour. By 1829, after soliciting men such as abolitionist Arthur Tappan, philanthropist Thomas Gallaudet, Congressman Edward Everett, and writer David Walker, Ibrahima had raised the necessary funds to free his family and set sail for Liberia, the American colony of freed African Americans in West Africa.

### FROM 1900 TO 1965:

#### BUILDING MUSLIM INSTITUTIONS

No serious institution-building by Muslims occurred until the first two decades of the 20th century. During this era, many Muslims, who largely identified with one another based not on religion but on race or ethnicity, began to establish places of worship, cemeteries, and mutual aid societies. These organizations were essential to the development of Muslim-American religious identity but were often as focused on

social networking, economic development, and political activism as they were on religious practice. In CHICAGO, for example, Bosnian-American Muslims created a mutual aid society around 1906. They helped pay each other's medical bills, celebrated Muslim holidays, purchased a Muslim cemetery, and drank lots of Turkish coffee together. In Michigan City, Indiana, ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS created a group in 1907 that by 1924 was known as the Modern Age Arabian Islamic Society. In CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, Muslims rented space for communal gatherings and prayers in 1925 and built their own mosque in 1934.

In Seattle, Washington, some Druze Muslims, a Middle Eastern religious community seen as heretical by most Sunni Muslims, created the "First Fruit of the Druze," a group that had chapters around North America by the 1920s. In DETROIT, two Syrian immigrant brothers, Muhammad and Hussein Karoub, created a Sunni mosque in 1921. In nearby Dearborn, near the southeast corner of town where Ford Motor Company developed its gigantic Rouge plant, immigrants also established a Shi'a mosque called the Hashemite Hall.

African-American Muslims also established various mosques and Muslim organizations during this period. In 1925, NOBLE DREW ALI formed the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America in Chicago, and in 1930, W. D. FARD created the NATION OF ISLAM in Detroit. Both of these organizations were missionary movements that hoped to bring black Americans back to what they argued was their original religion of Islam. But they were also political, economic, and social organizations that stimulated black entrepreneurship, increased the political clout of African Americans, defended African Americans against police violence, rehabilitated ex-convicts, and encouraged black solidarity. Though many immigrant Muslims later criticized these movements as unorthodox, they were the first Muslim philanthropic organizations that were national in scope. During the 1920s and 1930s, several Sunni Muslim mosques also took root in black America, though these communities were not able to develop a national network until after WORLD WAR II.

In the postwar period, both indigenous and immigrant Muslim movements and organizations grew at a much quicker rate. Muslim Americans continued to form groups along ethnic, racial, and national lines, but they also united to create pan-ethnic and even pan-racial Muslim-American organizations. Most prominent among them were the Nation of Islam; the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, created in 1952; and the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA), established in 1963. Such internal institution-building bore fruit after 1965, when South Asian, Arab, and other immigrants used their philanthropic resources to contribute equally to Muslim-American and non-Muslim causes.

### 1965–PRESENT: A PHILANTHROPIC FLOWERING

The IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 and the continued proliferation of indigenous Muslim groups, especially African Americans, resulted in exponential growth, not only of the Muslim-American community, but also of mosques, schools, advocacy groups, charities, and other Muslim-American philanthropic causes. In 1971, Pakistani Americans with strong ties to the Jamaat-i Islami party of Pakistan established the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA. In 1982, major Muslim organizations including the Muslim Students Association formed the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA. In 1992, mostly Arabic-speaking leaders from the MSA and the Islamic Society of North America then established the MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY. During this period, philanthropy was also directed toward the establishment of advocacy groups that defended Muslim rights and the image of Islam. Since 1990, a number of such organizations have also been established, including the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (probably the largest with over 32 chapters), the MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL, MAS Freedom Foundation, and the AMERICAN MUSLIM ALLIANCE. This list does not include many smaller regional or local public advocacy organizations that have been established by Muslims.

Muslim-American mosques and other Muslim-American organizations addressed a growing number of social concerns, including domestic violence, education, poverty, homelessness, interfaith outreach, and media relations. According to a 2001 survey published by the Council on American-Islamic Relations, mosques serve as important conduits of philanthropy among Muslim Americans. Eighty-four percent of mosques were reported to give cash assistance to families or individuals; 74 percent provided counseling services; 60 percent had prison or jail programs; 55 percent had a food pantry, a soup kitchen, or collection of food for the poor; 53 percent had a thrift store or collected clothes for the poor; 28 percent had a tutoring or literacy program; 18 percent had an antidrug or anticrime program; 16 percent had a daycare or preschool program; and 12 percent had a substance abuse program.

In addition, nearly every college campus with a Muslim population has established a Muslim Students Association. YOUTH groups such as the Interfaith Youth Core in Chicago have encouraged high school and middle school youth to be more involved with civic engagement and to volunteer their time to service projects that benefit all Americans. Professional associations such as the National Association of Muslim Lawyers, Islamic Medical Association of North America, American Muslim Social Scientists, Islamic Social Services Association, Association of Muslim Mental Health Professionals, and American Muslim Scientists and Engineers ask for Muslim support in exchange for amplifying Muslim

voices in the public sphere. Finally, Muslim Americans have established at least 12 major Muslim relief organizations in the United States that raise money to be spent on relief projects primarily in the Muslim world. These organizations reported raising more than \$93 million in 2006.

Muslim Americans have also rallied around national or international calls for philanthropy. For example, in response to Hurricane Katrina and the 2005 Pakistani earthquake, major Muslim-American organizations raised \$10 million for Katrina victims and at least \$20 million for earthquake victims. These numbers include only direct financial assistance, not the countless voluntary hours spent at the mosque, community, and individual levels to aid victims of these disasters.

One poll conducted by the Zogby organization asked Muslim Americans if they were involved in various kinds of civic engagement. They defined “involved” as having donated time or money or having served as an officer of an organization. Seventy-seven percent reported being involved with organizations that help the poor, sick, elderly, or homeless; 71 percent volunteered for a mosque or religious organization; 69 percent served a school or youth program; 46 percent volunteered for a professional organization; 45 percent served a neighborhood, civic, or community group; and 42 percent helped an arts or cultural group.

Another poll reported on Muslim-American attitudes toward philanthropy. Seventy-six percent expressed the belief that making charitable contributions or giving *zakat* was very important; an additional 14 percent stated that it was somewhat important; and only 8 percent stated that it

was not too important or not at all important. When ranking the Islamic religious activities in order of importance, *zakat* was second only to fasting. Muslim Americans said that giving to worthy causes was more important than performing the pilgrimage to Mecca, reading the QUR’AN daily, or performing daily prayers.

According to scholar Adil Najam, Pakistani Americans, most of whom are Muslims, may be among the most philanthropic people in the United States. Approximately 500,000 Pakistani Americans donate more than \$250 million in cash and kind on an annual basis. In addition, they contribute more than 43 million hours to volunteer work—which roughly translates into \$750 million of labor. Of this giving, 40 percent goes to charities in Pakistan, while an additional 20 percent goes to Pakistani causes in this country. Forty percent is donated to causes that have no connection to Pakistan. The most striking finding, however, was that Pakistani Americans give 3.5 percent of their estimated household income to charity, whereas the national average in the United States is 3.1 percent.

#### AFTER 9/11

In the wake of the attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, the U.S. government launched a number of raids on high-profile Muslim-American charities on the suspicion that they had ties to terrorism. While such raids yielded no information about Muslim-American links to al-Qaeda or the 9/11 attackers—at least no information that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was willing to make public—they did lead to prosecutions of a small number of Muslim-American charities on other grounds. In December 2001, for example, President George W. Bush named the Holy Land Foundation of Richardson, Texas, as a specially designated terrorist organization. Its assets were frozen and the charity was shut down.

On July 24, 2004, U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft announced that a grand jury in Dallas had indicted the Holy Land Foundation on 42 different counts related to the support of terrorism. “Today,” Ashcroft said, “a U.S.-based charity, that claims to do good works, is charged with funding works of evil.” Noting that the government’s investigation would have been “difficult, if not impossible” without the new surveillance powers granted by the USA PATRIOT ACT, Ashcroft explained that the foundation had violated the law by contributing \$12.4 million to Hamas, the Palestinian political party responsible both for providing social services to Palestinians and for conducting deadly attacks against Israeli civilians.

Three years later, in July 2007, in what the *Dallas Morning News* called the “biggest terrorist finance trial in history,” the trial of Holy Land Foundation officials began. There were a total of 197 charges against them.



Hoori Sadler raised more than \$700,000 for the University Muslim Medical Association (UMMA) Clinic in South Central Los Angeles, which began to offer free medical services to those in need in 1996. She is pictured here with Muslim-American comic Maz Jobrani. (David Livingston/Getty Images)



During the trial, the government admitted that the Holy Land Foundation had not directly funded suicide bombers but argued that the support of Hamas's charitable activities (including the building of hospitals and feeding of the poor) amounted to material support of a terrorist group. In October, the jury rendered its verdicts. Despite some convictions on minor charges, the jurors either acquitted the defendants or deadlocked on the major counts of the indictment. On these counts, the judge declared a mistrial. But on November 23, 2008, after retrying the case, federal prosecutors achieved a different result. Five Holy Land Foundation officials were found guilty of 108 criminal counts related to tax fraud, money laundering, and the support of terrorism.

As the Holy Land Foundation's lawyers planned their appeal, some critics of the government's prosecution of Muslim-American charities pointed out that no conviction related to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 had yet been obtained. The Department of Justice, they said, was casting an overly wide net in its attempt to convict and root out terrorists. In 2007, the American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit against the department on behalf of the largest Muslim-American nonprofit group, the Islamic Society of North America, claiming that the government had damaged its reputation by listing it as an "un-indicted co-conspirator" in one of its cases.

The effect of the government's action on Muslim-American philanthropy was unclear. At the start of Ramadan in 2004, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury John W. Snow issued a "Ramadan" statement, cautioning Muslims against giving to questionable groups: "When you open your hearts to charity during Ramadan, we encourage you to educate yourself on the activities of the charities to which you donate, to help ensure that your generosity is not exploited for nefarious purposes." He noted that it was a crime to support any of the 27 groups designated by the U.S. government as supporting terrorism. In response, Muslim-American philanthropists expressed anxiety about donating to any foreign Muslim causes.

Remittances sent to family and associates in Muslim-majority countries seemed to have declined. In 2001, of the top 20 countries receiving remittances from people in the United States, eight of them—Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, Bangladesh, Jordan, Yemen, and Pakistan—were Muslim-majority countries, while three additional countries—India, the former Yugoslavia, and Sri Lanka—have significant Muslim populations. By 2007, though India was rated as the top recipient of remittances from the United States, not one Muslim-majority country remained on the list.

At the same time, individual donations reported by Muslim-American relief organizations showed growth.

While the events of 9/11 introduced anxiety among Muslim Americans about giving to Muslim causes abroad, they hardly dampened the enthusiasm of Muslim Americans for philanthropy overall. Muslim Americans continued to develop their own institutions, contributed to an increasing number of non-Muslim causes, and became even more central to American society. Such enthusiasm expressed the spirit of a Muslim-American past defined by giving.

Muslim Americans have given their minds and bodies to the building of America from its very beginning. Despite the fact that Muslim slaves were forced to do so, their contributions were nonetheless important to the nation's development. In the 20th century, Muslim Americans built institutions that served their own interests and contributed to the social and cultural diversity of the United States. Finally, in the post-9/11 world, governmental suspicions of Muslim-American charities challenged all Americans to face important questions about the meaning of being American in an era fraught with insecurity and even hope that Muslim-American philanthropists might offer a bridge between the United States and the Muslim world.

Edward E. Curtis IV and Shariq A. Siddiqui

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### **PIEDAD (Propagación Islámica para la Educación de Devoción a Ala' el Divino)**

Founded in 1988 in New York by Khadijah Rivera, PIEDAD became the first Latina Muslim organization dedicated to Latina converts in the United States. PIEDAD stands for Propagación Islámica para la Educación de Devoción a Ala' el Divino (Islamic Propagation for the Education on the Devotion of Allah the Divine). Rivera started this organization to help non-Muslim Latinas married to Muslims understand Islamic culture better. While one of its initial tasks was the development of missionary activities for Latinas in the United States, PIEDAD also established programs to help women converts and non-Muslims address the issues related to marriage, FOOD preparation, and dealing with other family members that were suspicious about Islam.

As a volunteer-based organization, PIEDAD sought the help of other Muslim-American leaders and organizations in creating its programs and activities. Since its founding, it has developed programs and seminars for the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations (IIFSO), established five toll-free nationwide phone lines to guide people to local *masjids*, and distributed free literature about Islam.

By 2009, PIEDAD had five chapters and 300 members around the country. Rivera has presided over the organization since its founding, supported in her work by Jill Finney, a white Muslim convert, who has also served as vice president. PIEDAD has continued to engage in missionary activities, though their main task has become aiding new converts with the transition into a Muslim lifestyle. PIEDAD members often consult with one another on everyday concerns such as how to DRESS, to strengthen their marriages, and to raise their children. The Tampa chapter, for example, meets once a month in one of the members' houses to pray, to hear presentations, and to have informal discussions.

Like other U.S. Latina/o Muslim groups such as LADO (LATINO AMERICAN DAWAH ORGANIZATION), PIEDAD performs community service in addition to cooperating with other local Muslim groups. For fund-raisers, they have sold T-shirts, handmade ponchos, and handbags. LADO members have translated and proofread literature about the QUR'AN as part of their commitment to teach about Islam, especially to other Latina/os in the United States. They have also encouraged Muslim-American imams, or religious leaders, to learn Spanish so that they can better serve all Muslim Americans.

*Hjamil A. Martínez-Vázquez*

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**pilgrimage** See HAJJ.

### **poetry**

Muslim-American poetry is multiethnic, multicultural, multilingual, and multiracial, and its history reveals how Muslims reacted to racism and slavery, demanded civil rights, remembered war-torn homelands and stranded families, and reflected on their RELIGIOUS LIFE amid the ebbs and flows of adversity and ease. Like other American poetry, Muslim-American poetry has been published in collections and periodicals but has also been performed in front of friends, family, and broader live audiences. These varying ways of being poetic have revealed diverse snapshots of Muslim-American life. While Muslim Americans have been making poetry since the first AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES arrived in the colonial era, Muslim-American poets in the late 20th and early 21st centuries have contributed to what poet and scholar Mohja Kahf sees as an emerging and identifiable corpus of explicitly Muslim-American poetry. Though no anthology of Muslim-American poetry had yet been produced by 2009, the work of Muslim-American poets could be found in collections of their own work, poetry journals, Muslim periodicals, and in anthologies of African-American, ethnic, and multicultural literature.

### **MUSLIM-AMERICAN POETRY: 1900–1960**

Since the emergence of Islam in the seventh century, poetry in Muslim cultures has been a vital mode of social communication, expression, criticism, and exploration. This literary genre, created and performed in oral and written forms, was used to chronicle history, teach Arabic grammar, entertain, romance, and inspire. Vibrant vernacular traditions developed alongside literary ones as Islam spread from Arabia to Persia, North Africa, and Spain and later to South Asia, Indonesia, and southern Africa, expanding a poetic repertoire rooted in pre-Islamic Arabia and the QUR'AN to include imagery, symbolism, and metaphor from every new land. These poetic traditions came to the Americas with the African-American Muslim slaves who arrived from the 17th to 19th centuries and with immigrants from the Balkans, the Near and Middle East, South Asia, and Africa during the 19th and 20th centuries, though little evidence has yet emerged of the perpetuation or adaptation of such traditions in the Americas.

It was not until the formation of early 20th century Muslim organizations that Muslim-American poets begin to appear regularly in print. Small communities of Polish, Russian, and Lithuanian Muslims in New York, Albanian Muslims in Maine, and others in the Midwest and California may have been writing or reciting poetry, but the earliest examples of Muslim-American poetry are found in the newspapers widely distributed in the 1920s by the Ahmadiyya movement and the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America (MST). The *Moorish Voice*, the MST's primary publication, featured the work of male and female poets whose poems weave their tales of conversion and their penchant for racial justice into one solitary poetic expression. These poems provided the vernacular seeds of a determined and brutally honest verse that flowered decades later in the powerful poetry of the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. One poem by Sister Garret Bey published in February 1943 illustrates the changing meaning of race in the United States. Written during WORLD WAR II, the poem hails a future that is unencumbered by racial identity: "Time was, we thought in terms of race / . . . Now round the world our lads have gone / to set all people free / and everything they look upon / shows how deceived were we."

Another venue for the publication of Muslim-American poetry in the first half of the 20th century was the *MUSLIM SUNRISE*, the newspaper of AHMADI MUSLIM AMERICANS. After Muhammad Sadiq arrived in Chicago in 1920 from India as a missionary for the Ahmadiyya movement, he founded the periodical in order to refute misrepresentations of Islam and carry his mission's multiracial message to an eager and mostly African-American audience. The editors of the *Muslim Sunrise* printed translations of Urdu, Persian, and Arabic poetry written by Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908), the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement, creating a direct link between the South Asian and Arabic poetic tradition and new Muslim Americans.

Traditional styles of *ghazal* (lyric) and *qasida* (panegyric, or praise) poetry were represented, including Muslim imagery of the soul being drawn to God like a moth to a flame and Muslim themes of God as desirous love and God's followers as persons intoxicated with the love of God. Alongside selections of Islamic classical poetry and some secular poetry, vernacular poets from all levels of the movement contributed poems using free verse and rhymed verse. These poems included reflections on the Qur'an, prayer, and conversion and often addressed such religious topics from a political angle. Ahmadi Muslim-American poets were also reading other classical material as a Mrs. Garber from New York City indicated in her poem entitled "The Beauties of Islam." Published in the October 1921 issue of the *Muslim Sunrise*, it concludes with two lines of the well-known 11th-century Muslim mystic and theologian al-Ghazali.

Other major influences on Muslim-American poetry were the *mahjar* (émigré) poets, also known as the New York Pen League (*al-Rabita al-Qalamiyah*), from Syria and Lebanon, and the free (verse) poetry movement in the Muslim Middle East. The Pen League Poets were Christian-Arab immigrants who embraced the free verse of Walt Whitman and American Romanticism, giving new life to Arabic poetry, but whose Arabic work contained substantial Muslim imagery and metaphor. Later Arab-Muslim poets like Adonis, Mahmoud Darwish, and Nazik al-Malaika would also influence Arab-American poets with their modern Arabic poetry that differed from classical verse in content and style and in structure and rhyme.

#### THE NATION OF ISLAM AND THE BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT

*MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, the weekly newspaper of the NATION OF ISLAM founded in 1961, became another major outlet for Muslim-American poetry in the 1960s. Its editors published NOI members' poetry amid coverage of international and domestic current events, vivid political cartoons, and the messages of NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD. These poets used free and rhymed verse with some poetic prose to illustrate their Islamic religious imagination and hope in a time rife with racial violence and turmoil. Children also were encouraged to write and publish in the newspaper.

Among these poets was Sonia Sanchez, also known as Laila Mannan (1934– ). Sanchez maintained a regular column of poetry in *Muhammad Speaks* called New Frontiers and published two independent collections of her own poetry during her three years in the NOI from 1972 to 1975. She had known MALCOLM X in New York and was influenced poetically by his oratorical style. Her poetry directly referenced the NOI, Allah, and Islam as viable responses to the cruel and difficult social realities she witnessed. She was active in the Black Arts Movement (BAM) established by poet, playwright, and NOI member AMIRI BARAKA (LeRoi Jones).

Though poetry ceased to have the same place in the NOI after the death of Elijah Muhammad in 1975, the practice of poetry as an art of liberation was perpetuated by individuals such as Marvin X. Another NOI poet and cofounder of BAM, Marvin X wrote poems addressing systemic poverty and disproportionate incarcerations of African Americans in the United States. Later, he also cited the poetry and teachings of 13th-century Persian Sufi poet Jalaluddin Rumi and the Sri Lankan-American Sufi Bawa Muhaiyadeen as influential on his poetry.

#### LATE TWENTIETH- AND EARLY TWENTY-FIRST- CENTURY IMMIGRANT POETRY

The poetry of ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS after 1965, when the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 opened the doors to increased

numbers of immigrants, documented stories of forced emigration and war, meditating on life as a refugee or an exile. But it also addressed other aspects of Arab-American and American life. Indiana-born poet H. S. Hamod (1936– ), for example, penned an elegiac poem on musician Joe Williams and others on the politics of innocents in Iraq and Palestine. The poets of this era, including Etel Adnan (1925– ), Fawaz Turki (1940– ), and Elmaz Abinader (1954– ), wrote primarily in free verse, sometimes referring to Muslim life and politics with nostalgia and at other times expressing an impatience with a lack of social and cultural reform in Middle Eastern societies.

Younger-generation poets of this era include Syrian-American Mohja Kahf (1967– ), who has written with humor about the cultural contact between Muslim religious life and American secular culture. She has been a contributor to *AZIZAH*, a Muslim-American women's magazine that features a section of poetry in each issue.

Arab-American Muslim poets with ties to countries other than the United States have written insightfully into the complexities of being people betwixt and between their various homelands. Libyan-American Khaled Mattawa (1964– ) and Palestinian-American SUHEIR HAMMAD (1973– ), for example, have both reflected about their homelands' plight and the realities of having a multiple identity in the 21st century. Critical of UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS in the Middle East, their writing, like that of many other Muslim poets, has provided a perspective into the human quality of the life, dreams, and habits of Muslims.

SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS have also been vital contributors to the lively Muslim-American poetry scene of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Some of the poets have sought inspiration in vernacular poetic forms and languages from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, India, and Sri Lanka. Agha Shahid Ali (1949–2001), a Kashmiri-American poet, focused much of his work on *ghazal* poetry and published several volumes in English. The *ghazal* is a sixth-century pre-Islamic Arabic poetic form of rhyming couplets and a refrain that entered South Asia with Persian-speaking Muslims. It is written in Persian, Arabic, and Urdu. The *ghazal* has been attractive to Westerners for over a century, and although its traditional subjects of pain, separation, and love were more or less maintained, its form had been highly compromised for free verse. Agha Shahid Ali's work in English was instrumental in returning the *ghazal* back to its traditional form. His poetry used the *ghazal* to weave together his American social and natural landscape with his Muslim poetic consciousness.

In contrast, Indian-American Muslim Saleem Peeradina has not used traditional forms of poetry, instead writing in free verse replete with the imagery and metaphors of India. His poetry is not nostalgic but rather captures moments in

the cross-cultural transformation of a South Asian man, husband, and father in America. Gender has been a vital area of poetic expression for South Asian-American men and women, and women's poetry is replete with the frustration, humor, and triumph that accompany their life stories. South Asian-Muslim Americans have charted the triumphs and trials of being a Muslim woman, mother, daughter, or sister in the United States.

Political events, sexuality, and social conditions have also been frequent topics as Tehmina Khan's poetic critiques of UNITED STATES MILITARY action in Iraq have demonstrated.

Iranian-American Muslims have comprised another significant ethnic group contributing to Muslim-American poetry. While Arabic holds poetic stature among Muslims, second to this, if only in deference to the language of the Qur'an, must be Persian poetry. Majid Naficy (1952– ) published his first book of poetry in Persian in 1969. He was active in the revolution against the Shah but suffered under the Islamic revolution, when its leaders abandoned many of their leftist allies once they had consolidated power. He has continued to publish poetry in the United States as an Iranian exile and is intimately connected with Iranian-American poets through workshops and readings.

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 has left its mark on much of Iranian-American poetry though classical imagery; the scents of persimmon, jasmine, and roses have remained central as well. Poet Persis Karim's anthology of diaspora Iranian women writers contains a rich collection of Muslim-American poetry with Persian themes interpreting an American social landscape. Karim's poetry has lamented the innocent casualties of the war in Iraq and questions the patriarchal implementations and interpretations of Islamic law.

#### PERFORMANCE POETRY AND SUFISM

Iranian-American Haale Gafari grew up in the Bronx, New York, and has weaved classical and modern Persian poetry, including the works of Attar, Rumi, and Hafez, into English verse during musical performances. Gafari has also published her poetry, which also exhibits the influence of SUFISM, the mystical branch of Islam.

For some Muslim poets, jazz and blues music has emerged as a primary medium in which to express their poetic sensibilities. While a variety of wind, string, and percussive instruments have accompanied Muslim poetry for centuries, contemporary performances of classical and modern Sufi poetry have also adopted electric instruments and contemporary beats to accompany their rhythmical free verse. The roots of modern HIP-HOP and spoken-word performance have been located by some in the 1960s Muslim poet/musician group the Last Poets, who emerged out of a Harlem writers group. Still a vital part of the hip-hop poetry genre, NOI members have been joined by increasing numbers of Sunni



and Shī'ai poets who have performed at open mics, poetry slams, and spoken-word gatherings. Artists Amir Sulaiman and Brother Dash, whose performances have attracted large audiences, often offer popular commentary on the Qur'an and critical social commentary. Calligraphy of Thought, a Muslim poetry collective in Oakland, California, has met for open mics, regularly providing a venue for young Muslims to express and listen to Muslim social, political, and spiritual concerns. These poets have challenged public stereotypes and religious dogmatism found in their own Muslim communities. While diverse, the group has included Cathy Espinoza, one of a growing number of LATINO/A MUSLIM AMERICANS.

WHITE MUSLIM AMERICANS have also been vital contributors to Muslim-American poetry, and none has had a larger impact than performance artist Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore (1940– ), who published his first book of poetry before his conversion to Islam in 1970. His poetry has included reflections on the Vietnam War, Muslim life, and Qur'anic verse and has itself been situated within an Islamic cosmology. Moore, like many other Muslim poets, also writes poetry containing no specific Islamic references.

Foreign Sufi groups have also introduced Americans to poetic traditions in Turkish, Urdu, Swahili, and Persian, and Sufi Muslim Americans have performed classical Sufi poetry during their *DHIKR* ceremonies. Among them are followers of the MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER, or so-called whirling dervishes, whose ritual dance incorporates both music and poetry. In addition, the BEKTASHI SUFI ORDER, whose headquarters is located in greater Detroit, has been reciting poetry as part of its religious practices since the 1950s.

### CONCLUSION

Muslim-American poetry began with a distinctly African-American tone that then absorbed a complex immigrant narrative from the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. These immigrants, who introduced new languages and cultural imagery into Muslim-American poetry, arrived voluntarily, but would often share the penchant for justice and political consciousness of African Americans. The history of Muslim-American poetry illustrates the struggles of Muslim Americans to combat racial discrimination, deal with the contradictory pressures of ASSIMILATION and alienation, and find religious meaning in their lives. This focus on particular concerns simultaneously raises universal concerns with love and loss, violence and peace, and the often absurd conditions of modern life. Muslim-American poetry is composed in a variety of poetic forms including rhymed and free verse, and it can be written or oral, and performed with music. Muslim-American poets can serve as carriers and transformers of religious tradition, radical social commentators, or pure entertainers.

Melinda Krokus

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## Journals

MELA: Multiethnic Literatures of America

MELUS: Multiethnic Literatures of the United States

Mizna: Prose, Poetry, and Art Exploring Arab America

## Poems of Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore

Muslim-American poet Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore (1940– ), a native of Oakland, California, published his first book of poems, *Dawn Visions* (1964), before his conversion to Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam, in 1970. As a participant in the lively arts scene in Berkeley, the home of the University of California, Moore also established and directed the *Floating Lotus Magic Opera Company*. In 1972, he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the five pillars of Islamic practice, and, during the 1970s, traveled and lived in Morocco, Spain, Algeria, and Nigeria. In 1990, he moved to Philadelphia, where he continued his writing and editing of poetry. In a career that has spanned over four decades, he has written more than 50 collections of poetry. The excerpts from this body of work reprinted below include “Abdallah Jones—Takes the Antique Seller’s Advice,” the first chapter of *Abdallah Jones and the Disappearing-Dust Cape*, an extended poem written for children and the young at heart in the early 1980s but published in 2006; “A Thousand Armies,” a poem written in 2003 but published in 2006 during the Iraq War; and “The Heart Has Reason to Believe,” a poem written in 2008 on the occasion of Barack Obama’s election to the presidency.



### Chapter 1: Abdallah Jones—Takes the Antique Seller’s Advice (2006)

Abdallah Jones jumped off the train as it drew near  
 the  
 trestle with the glass ball of disappearing dust in  
 his hand  
 which he had just snatched from the evil magi-  
 cian who  
 drew strange symbols on a tray of sand  
 preparing to make all the people in the world  
*disappear!*  
 Abdallah had been trying to get into his castle for a  
 whole year,  
 finding out all he could, disguising himself as an  
 idiot  
 beggar in the marketplace,

standing close to the Caliph’s horse when it went  
 on  
 parades, keeping an expressionless face  
 as the dust rose around him, trying to get clues.

Finally he found out, in a back-room antique  
 shop,  
 from one of those sinister marketplace sellers who  
 sits in a broken-down chair and just chews,  
 the whereabouts of the Sorcerer’s castle.

“But you cannot go alone, my boy, and if they catch  
 you, what a hassle!  
 They usually throw people like you to the sharks,  
 or stretch you on a stretching rack, holding flares  
 close  
 to your face so the flying sparks  
 burn out your eyes,  
 or some such other unpleasant surprise.  
 He’s the Caliph’s man. You don’t think you can reach  
 him so easily!”

But then the man drew Abdallah toward him,  
 cocking  
 one eye and whispering sleazily  
 into his ear.

“Never fear—  
 for the right price I can get you in, but the rest is up to you!”

“What’s the right price?” asked Abdallah. And  
 then the  
 old scoundrel curled his toes up in his pointed  
 shoes  
 and became leeringly his most archetypical self, poor  
 man,  
 looking like a gnarled and deformed elf more than  
 a man. He was all calculation, all scheming, all  
 “opportunity knocking.”

But Abdallah stayed cool. Even this experience he  
 didn’t  
 let on was shocking  
 to him, here among the dusty bric-a-brac.

“I’ll take all your money—*all of it!* Don’t hold any  
 of it  
 back!

Only then will I get you into that Sorcerer’s hall.”  
 Abdallah trusted Allah. He reached into his  
 pocket and  
 pulled out *all*,  
 not a cent did he save behind.

“Are you sure that’s all?” asked the man, “or  
 Allah strike  
 you blind?”

"Yes!" said Abdallah with absolute confidence.  
 "One thousand, seven hundred dollars, and  
 eighty-seven cents.

It's what I needed to find the powder before that  
 shaytan uses it.  
 It's a plot against mankind, and I'm the one sent  
 by my  
 Shaykh to be the one who defuses it,  
*insha'Allah!* But I must hurry before he puts it to  
 use!"

"Then put on this cloak, this hood, these rags,  
 and take  
 this jeweled box the magician bought—the ruse  
 is this! You've come from my shop and are delivering  
 the box to his room.  
 Then you step out into the hallway and get  
 behind one  
 of the curtains, and quickly turn the rags  
 inside-out.

You'll then look like just another groom  
 for the Sorcerer's horses. That way you can remain in  
 the castle for a little while.  
 But be quick! They're sure to notice you right  
 away. Be  
 sure not to smile!  
 They never smile there. It's a dark place, and  
 they're all  
 a gloomy lot."

"Don't worry," said Abdallah, "just give me the  
 clothes  
 and let me put them on. I feel I haven't got  
 much time. That madman may strike any moment!"

So he got into disguise, and was given the box, with a  
 letter written by the antique dealer to be sent  
 with the delivery, to make it all look official.  
 Then Abdallah took a little white homeopathic pill  
 for the jitters and set off.  
 He made as long and gloomy a face as that of Boris  
 Karloff  
 as he walked through the street studying the map the  
 man had given him,

through the market, past a dark door, *one, two,*  
*three* paces,  
 the wind having driven him  
 to a hole in a wall—*there!* With no one looking, he  
 darted in  
 and walked tight-shouldered between narrow  
 shrubbery,  
 then came to a stream, and found a little boat he  
 quickly departed in,

going along a shadowy channel, finally under another  
 wall, into a kind of stone building,  
 then in total darkness, damp and spider-webby,  
 all alone,  
 mildewing  
 sides brushing his hands as he rowed, the only sound  
 the splashing of oars.

Then he saw a tiny peep of light, and the sound of a  
 waterfall cascade as it roars  
 down a huge chasm.  
 Suddenly the boat lurched forward in a strong  
 spasm  
 and he found himself outside heading for a cliff!  
 Would he go off the edge, here all alone, and be  
 found  
 weeks later dead, and wet, and stiff?

\* \* \*

**A Thousand Armies (2003)**  
**From *Psalms for the Brokenhearted* (2006)**

*And the hapless Soldier's sigh  
 Runs in blood down Palace walls*

—William Blake

A thousand armies sat on a wall and  
 everyone of them was dead

eating sandwiches out of little tin boxes  
 yellow broken teeth and considerable chewing

But their eyes were not that interested in seeing  
 their eyes didn't follow anything moving in front  
 of them

or look as they pulled the waxed paper away  
 from their bread  
 or broke open their bottles of water or sat with  
 their friends

There was a constant murmuring like a stomach  
 churning its juices  
 a constant scratching like animals caught  
 between walls

They sat on a wall overlooking an orchard and  
 each one of them was dead

But they watched the seasons come to life on the  
 vine in the vineyards and down the long  
 crop rows though their eyes barely took it in  
 and when the crops were harvested and the  
 snows came they barely blinked they barely noticed

Thousands of armies dangling their legs bootless  
 in heaven

eating sandwiches out of little silver boxes  
 their eyes transformed from burning buildings  
 and people  
 running into the streets to  
 green fields full of lions and lambs and other  
 winged animals  
 lying together

though their eyes were always elsewhere  
 and their hearts were as round as the world

\* \* \*

### **The Heart Has Reason to Believe (2008)**

*Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point*  
 —Blaise Pascal

The heart has reason to believe its tropical  
 islands will bloom  
 giant scarlet palm trees whose  
 spraying spathes make golden pinwheels in a  
 bright blue sky

The heart has reason to believe the secret door to  
 Allah's private  
 chamber opens here without benefit of lock  
 but whose key is that murmur on the lips of a lover  
 that reverberates through our bones to the  
 earth-bound bottoms of our toes

The heart has reason to believe in a sky whose  
 opening eyelid  
 shows an eye that goes on and on into oracular  
 oblivion  
 seeing every creation He's ever created from  
 time before time to time after time has expired

The heart has reason to believe it's riding a  
 team of wild white horses going at full gallop  
 through all  
 the worlds and all the world's oceans at once  
 to run along a shore brought to life as we pass  
 whose faces open like white roses and whose  
 voices chime like silver bells

The heart has reason to believe the heart's God's  
 residence  
 and we enter it with caution and with care  
 with courage and bravado for He's waiting there  
 for our  
 entrance and His Face is already coming into  
 focus in our sphere

The heart has reason to believe all this by the  
 simple fact of being a heart

and not a steamboat or a plank of wood floating  
 on black water  
 where moonlight cannot reach

And the spaces between the heart's beats are  
 orbital dimensions  
 complete worlds come to birth in

and the beats themselves are His Name  
 as He names the worlds that come to birth

How can we not be delirious with love under  
 these  
 perfect climactic conditions!

When He beckons us toward Him by the very  
 organ that keeps us alive

in the very chambers He's created for His voice  
 to echo and reecho in

calling us home!



*Source:* Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore, "Abdallah Jones—Takes the Antique Seller's Advice," from *Abdallah Jones and the Disappearing-Dust Cape*, Philadelphia: The Ecstatic Exchange, 2006; "A Thousand Armies," from *Psalms for the Brokenhearted*, Philadelphia: The Ecstatic Exchange, 2006; and "The Heart Has Reason to Believe," from *Through Rose Colored Glasses*, Philadelphia: The Ecstatic Change, 2008.

## **politics**

Understanding Muslim-American participation in U.S. politics depends on how one defines politics. In the broadest sense, politics is the negotiation of power and the pursuit of personal and collective interests at all levels of society. Human beings are inevitably political, since they are social creatures who figure out how to organize and govern themselves. In a more narrow sense, politics is the art and science of governance involving the ways in which a political body such as a state or nation is formed and managed. Muslim Americans have played a role in U.S. politics since the birth of the republic, though their involvement in issues of governance, including elections, did not begin in earnest until the 20th century.

### **BLACK MUSLIM POLITICS FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM**

Using a broad definition of politics, it is possible to understand how Muslims have contributed to U.S. politics since they first arrived on American shores, mostly as slaves who, though lacking the right to vote and most other rights afforded by the Constitution, attempted to improve their living conditions



and gain their freedom. Without mounting a formal political campaign to abolish slavery, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES such as LAMEN KEBE (1767–?) and YARROW MAMOUT (ca. 1736–1829) used a variety of techniques to challenge the negative effects of the “peculiar institution” on their lives. Kebe, for example, used his literacy in ARABIC as a way to convince others of his human worth and became an ally of the American Colonization Society, which hoped to transport African Americans to Africa. His strategy worked, and he succeeded in returning home to Africa.

Yarrow Mamout, on the other hand, convinced his master, after decades of bondage, that he was no longer capable of working—that, as he put it, “Olda massa been tink he got all de work out of a Yaro[s] bone.” Mamout knew that slaveholders often freed their older slaves to avoid paying for the slaves’ food and housing. But after being freed around the age of 64, Mamout went to work for himself, earned \$200, bought stock in Columbia Bank, and purchased property and a house in Washington, D.C.

As African Americans converted to various forms of Islam in the 1920s and 1930s, they did so partly to protest their lack of full citizenship rights in the United States—rights that had been guaranteed by the 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution but which would not be enforced until the 1964 Civil Rights and 1965 Voting Rights Acts were passed and signed into LAW by President Lyndon Johnson. Facing DISCRIMINATION in employment, housing, and education in addition to police brutality and extralegal mob violence, some African Americans were attracted to the notion that by becoming Muslim, they might achieve the power and prestige that other ethnic minorities such as Italian Americans and Irish Americans had been able to gain. Others hoped to establish a nation within a nation, largely separating from whites in order to create a social space where they could achieve their version of the American dream. In both cases, ethnic and religious solidarity was seen as a weapon of the weak in a country dominated by an Anglo-Protestant majority.

In 1925, when NOBLE DREW ALI created the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, he told blacks that while they were citizens of the United States, their national origin was Moorish, or Moroccan. Ali issued identity cards indicating these Moorish national origins, echoing the idea that Moorish Americans, like other ethnic minorities in the United States, had a proud ethnic identity that white Americans ought to respect. This idea was repeated in 1930, when W. D. FARD created the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), a simultaneously religious and political movement that sought self-determination for African Americans. Fard and his successor, ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975), stressed the importance of totally separating from whites and forming alternative economic, political, and cultural institutions, including schools. He banned participation in U.S. elections.

While African-American Sunni Muslims such as MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN (1886–1957) and Wali Akram rejected the NOI’s unique teachings about the divinity of W. D. Fard and the prophecy of Elijah Muhammad, they shared the NOI’s emphasis on cultural and economic self-determination. They, too, advocated the building of a separate black “polis” within the United States that could provide the opportunities denied to them by white American society. In the 1940s, for example, some of Ezaldeen’s followers established a farming community in West Valley, New York, called Jabul Arabiyya, the Mountain of Arabic-Speaking People. Approximately 40 residents owned 462 acres, a schoolhouse, a place of worship, and 15 houses, where they attempted to live outside the boundaries of mainstream American politics.

### TWENTIETH-CENTURY FOUNDATIONS

As Muslim immigrants from Europe, Asia, and Africa came to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, their political involvement revolved largely around local and sometime regional groups focused on improving their living conditions. The informal politics of many ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, TURKISH-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, and SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS in the early 1900s often inwardly focused on their own ethnic group. As Muslims volunteered to serve in the UNITED STATES MILITARY during WORLD WAR I, however, that situation began to change. Increasingly seeing themselves as Americans, for example, Muslim farmers in NORTH DAKOTA joined the major national political parties and voted in local and national elections.

In the 1920s, there was also briefly a convergence of immigrant and African-American politics, as an increasing number of Muslim Americans, of whatever ethnicity, spoke out against European and American colonialism and interventionism in what they called the “colored world”—that is, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. DUSÉ MOHAMED ALI, an Anglo-Egyptian actor and playwright, became head of the African Affairs division of the Universal Negro Improvement Association in 1922 and foreign affairs columnist for the *Negro World*, warning of a rise of Muslim opposition to Western imperialism across Africa and Asia. Arab-American Muslims became politically active in fighting Zionism, the movement to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine. In 1917, hundreds of Arab-American protesters, both Muslims and Christians, met at a hotel in Brooklyn to denounce the Balfour Declaration, which expressed Great Britain’s support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, and the Young Men’s Moslem Association continued the struggle in the late 1920s, meeting with Secretary of State Henry Stimson to lobby the U.S. government to halt European Jewish immigration to Palestine.

Such protests, though expressing a certain degree of alienation, were also evidence that Muslim Americans were using mainstream political means to accomplish their ends.

For lighter-skinned Muslims, the lack of a racial stigma fostered their ASSIMILATION into mainstream politics, and Muslim Americans in places such as North Dakota and TOLEDO, OHIO, increasingly identified with the United States and its political system. While many African-American Muslims were willing during WORLD WAR II to go to jail rather than fight the Japanese, whom they considered to be fellow people of color, more than a thousand, mainly immigrant Muslim Americans, served in the war.

The fracturing of Muslim-American political interests along lines of race and ethnicity as well as political affiliation, class, religious identity, and other factors was a sign that the community was already too diverse to hold one single political platform or view. Much of the institution-building among Muslim immigrants after 1945 focused explicitly on integration into mainstream politics, while the black separatism of the Nation of Islam (NOI) helped to catapult it into a lofty position as the most popular of over a dozen different black Muslim groups during this era. The NOI became a place where African Americans could express their discontent with the ongoing scourge of Jim Crow segregation—not outlawed until passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964—and their solidarity with the struggles of colonized people attempting to gain their independence. During the VIETNAM WAR, there was no more powerful symbol of protest than that of boxer MUHAMMAD ALI (1942– ), one of many NOI members willing to go to PRISON rather than participate in what they considered to be an unjust war.

Muslim immigrant groups, often dominated by Arab Americans in this era, expressed support of Arab nationalism and protested the founding of the state of Israel in 1948, but were also focused on claiming an equal social and political status with other white Americans. For example, the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (FIA), formed in 1952, actively lobbied government officials for recognition and accommodations for Muslim religious practices. In the early 1950s, FIA founder Abdullah Igram, a World War II veteran, convinced the Department of Defense to allow Muslim Americans to identify their religious identities on their “dogtags,” the identity tags generally worn around a soldier’s neck. These kinds of political engagements also led to the election of the first Muslims in public office. In 1963, James H. Karoub, of DETROIT, MICHIGAN—the son of religious leader HUSSEIN KAROUB (1892–1973)—was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives.

#### LATE TWENTIETH-CENTURY POLITICAL FLOWERING

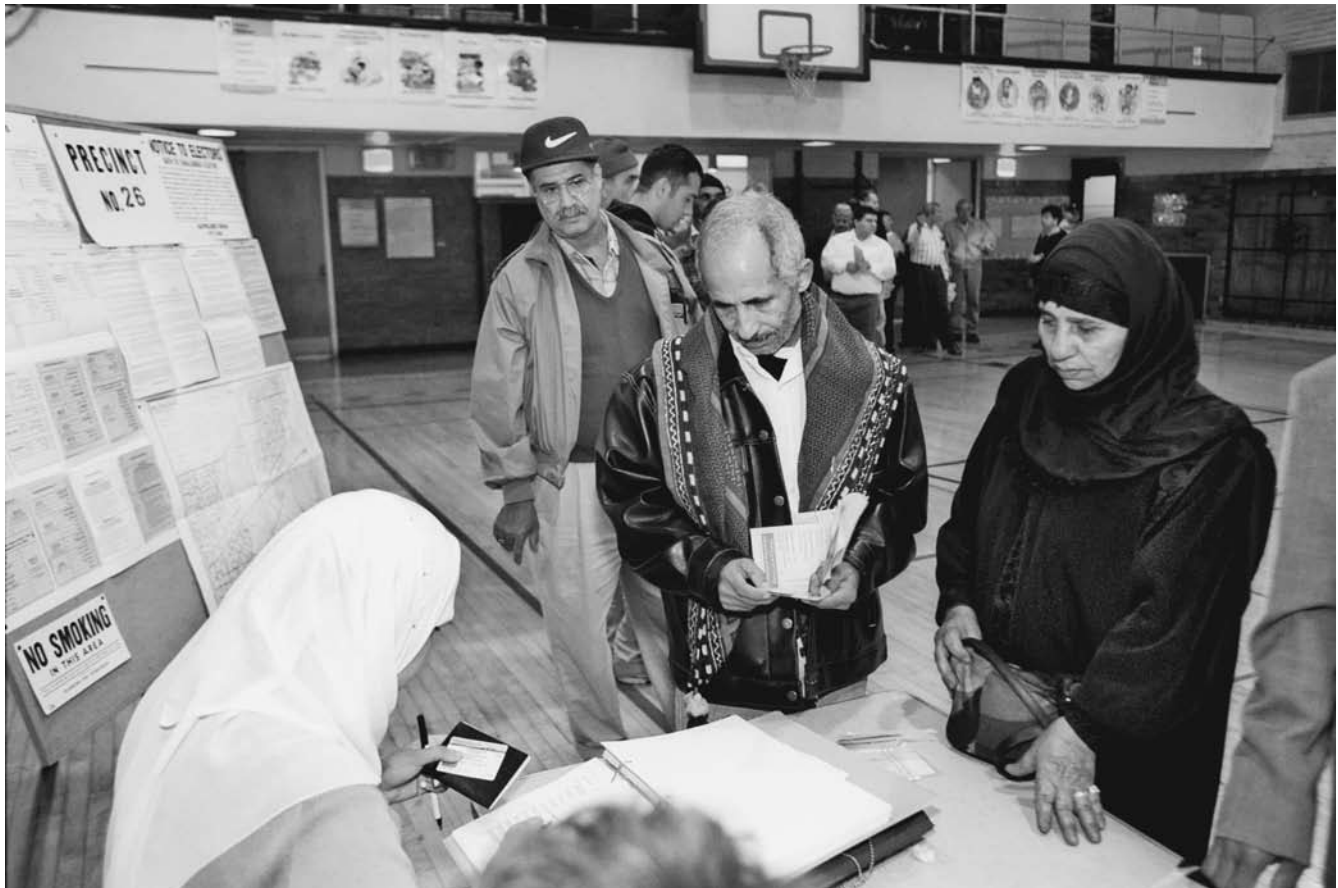
Though many African-American Muslims stressed the need for separate black political institutions until the 1970s, and other Muslims, both immigrant and indigenous, advocated a

healthy separation from what they saw as the corrupt world of politics, the last three decades of the 20th century were overwhelmingly characterized by increased mainstream political organizing among Muslim Americans. In 1975, W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008) inherited the leadership of the NOI from his father, Elijah Muhammad, and quickly reversed the organization’s traditional boycott of electoral politics. Mohammed encouraged his members to vote in all elections and become active politicians themselves—a move that later led to the election of many African-American Muslims to public office.

In addition, the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 led to the immigration of more than a million Muslims to the United States, and these Muslims achieved, on the whole, remarkable financial success. Using increased financial clout and social connections, many of these Muslims were able to organize a number of effective public affairs and lobbying groups. The largest of them, the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA), was a grassroots organization formed out of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION in 1982. Its headquarters were in Plainfield, Indiana—rather than in Washington, D.C.—and the group came to focus largely on responding to the needs of the growing number of individual MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS, which were its institutional members. But like the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA, the MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY, and other predominantly immigrant groups, it also encouraged the involvement of Muslim Americans in U.S. politics.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of Muslim-American public affairs and lobbying organizations emerged to influence U.S. politics. In addition to the MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL, the American Muslim Congress, and the AMERICAN MUSLIM ALLIANCE, the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS, established in 1994, attempted to gain access to elected and appointed officials in the executive and legislative branches of the federal government, issued press releases on their political positions, and organized letter-writing campaigns and protests on issues ranging from the employment discrimination faced by women who wore a HIJAB, or head scarf, to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. In 1998, nearly every major Muslim-American national organization supported the founding of the American Muslim Political Coordinating Council (AMPCC), whose goal was to help present a united front on political issues of common interest.

Another measure of increased Muslim-American political engagement during this period was the increasing number of Muslims who ran for and were elected to public office at the local, state, and national level. In 1991, Charles Bilal was elected mayor of Kountze, Texas. In 1993, SHEILA ABDUS-SALAAM (1952– ) was elected to a 14-year term on New York State’s Supreme Court for the County of New



Voters in Michigan have helped Muslim Americans emerge as a small but meaningful voting bloc in U.S. elections. *(Jim West/Alamy)*

York. In 1996, Larry Shaw was elected to the North Carolina State Senate. In 2000, Saghir “Saggy” Tahir became the only Muslim Republican elected to a state office when he won a seat in the New Hampshire House of Representatives. That year, Tahir was only one of perhaps hundreds of Muslim Americans, according to the American Muslim Alliance, who were candidates for various public offices around the country.

In 2002, Yaphett El-Amin was elected to the Missouri House of Representatives—one of the first Muslim-American women to achieve this distinction. Then, in 2006, KEITH M. ELLISON (1963– ) of Minneapolis, Minnesota, became the first Muslim elected to Congress, and in 2008, ANDRÉ D. CARSON (1974– ) of Indianapolis, Indiana, became the second Muslim in the U.S. House of Representatives.

#### AFTER 9/11

As a result of the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Muslim Americans faced violent backlash, increased employment discrimination, and surveillance, detention, and extraordinary rendition authorized by the USA PATRIOT ACT signed into law on October 26, 2001. Muslim-American

political participation increased in the wake of the attacks, as Muslims sought to identify politicians and interest groups that would become allies in what they considered to be a struggle to defend their rights as Americans. The opposition of Muslim-American groups, in tandem with the efforts of civil liberties groups and groups representing ethnic minorities, led to widespread dissatisfaction with the USA PATRIOT Act. By 2003, over a hundred municipalities and counties passed resolutions criticizing or refusing to cooperate with the provisions of the law.

At the same time, a number of Muslim-American leaders also encouraged Muslims to become more involved in the war on terrorism. The FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA, a body of scholars trained in SHARI‘A, a Muslim code of law and ethics, issued an opinion stating that Muslim-American involvement in the war on terrorism was justifiable on the grounds that as Americans, Muslims should help to defend the country in a just cause. Young Muslim-American men responded by joining the U.S. military and by joining the antiterror force of the New York City Police Department.

In 2003, AMPCC announced its position on the impending IRAQ WAR. Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, the council



declared, was a dictator whose actions were un-Islamic. Calling for the Iraqi president to resign, AMPCC also asked President George W. Bush not to go to war, explaining that the invasion would cause more problems than it would solve. It proposed instead that the United Nations should administer fair and free elections to decide the next government of Iraq.

The Bush administration's foreign and domestic policies caused a shift in Muslim-American party affiliation. In the 2000 election, AMPCC had endorsed Bush, the Republican candidate for president, largely because of his opposition to the use of secret evidence in federal terrorism trials. Muslim support may have been vital to Bush's victory in Florida—the state that ultimately tipped the election to Bush—according to the American Conservative Network. In the 2004 presidential contest, according to a 2007 Pew poll, approximately 85 percent of Muslim-American voters supported Democratic candidate John Kerry, U.S. senator from Massachusetts, over President Bush, who was running for reelection. But many Muslim Americans did not turn out to vote: 58 percent of U.S. Muslim citizens reported voting in the election, as compared to 74 percent of the general public.

According to the same Pew poll, the plurality of Muslim Americans (38 percent) identified themselves as political moderates, with 63 percent saying that they were Democrats or leaned Democratic. Only 11 percent identified themselves as Republicans, which indicated the strong opposition of Muslim Americans to the domestic and foreign policies of the Bush administration. Just 15 percent approved of the way President Bush was handling his job. The Pew report deemed Muslim Americans “big government social conservatives.” While seven in 10 Muslim Americans favored “big government” with increased social service and especially federal assistance to the poor, 61 percent said that homosexuality was “a way of life that should be discouraged by society, not accepted” and 59 percent said that the government should do more to protect morality.

While Muslim Americans shared generally positive views about their experiences in the United States, they differed markedly from the general population in their views toward U.S. foreign policy. Approximately eight out of every 10 Muslims interviewed said that they were happy or very happy with their lives in the United States. A large majority (71 percent) said that hard work leads to success in the United States. Though 76 percent of those surveyed expressed a concern over the rise of Islamic extremism in the world, only 26 percent of Muslims, compared to 67 percent of the general population, viewed the U.S.-led war on terror as a “sincere effort to reduce terrorism.” Approximately one out of 10 (12 percent) thought that the Iraq War was the “right decision,” while 45 percent of the general populace supported the decision to go to war.

In the 2008 presidential campaign, Muslim Americans voted overwhelmingly for Democrat Barack Obama, who had positioned himself as one of the few candidates who had opposed the Iraq War before it began. One poll conducted in 10 states determined that 89 percent of Muslim voters had cast their votes for Obama. During the course of the campaign, many Muslim Americans kept their enthusiasm for the candidate quiet, fearing that their support would actually hurt his chances. Having felt the sting of anti-Muslim discrimination themselves, they feared that the rumors about his supposedly secret Muslim identity might keep others from voting for him. Oddly, this brand of politics had deep roots in the United States. It echoed a trend in the early republic when “Muslim” was used as an epithet, meant to discredit one's opponent.

### CONCLUSION

But unlike in the early republic, Muslim Americans in the late 20th and early 21st centuries had organized politically to protect their rights and advance their social status in the United States. Their increased participation in U.S. politics was a vital sign of their historical journey in the United States. Enslaved at the beginning of U.S. history, some Muslim Americans used surreptitious politics to improve their living conditions and perhaps go back home. In the beginning of the 20th century, most were focused on local and informal politics, attempting to figure out their relationships to one another and the communities in which they lived. In the wake of World War I, however, both indigenous and immigrant Muslim Americans attempted to affect American government in a formal fashion. Those efforts blossomed in the late 20th century as Muslim Americans increased in number and in wealth. They created both grassroots organizations and Washington lobbies, built political alliances, and, by 2008, elected more than 20 different Muslim politicians to various posts, including city halls and state legislatures, around the country. Though still representing a small percentage of Americans by the beginning of the 21st century, their centrality to the battles over civil liberties and U.S. foreign policy, among other issues, made them a consequential presence in U.S. politics.

*Edward E. Curtis IV*

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### **Zahid Bukhari on Muslims in American Politics (2000)**

*Zahid Bukhari, who graduated from the University of Connecticut with a Ph.D. in political science, has studied political engagement on two continents. From 1978 to 1983, he was executive director of the Pakistan Institute of Public Opinion in Islamabad. In the United States, he served as Secretary General of the Islamic Circle of North America from 1990 to 1995. From 1999 to 2004, he served as director of the Muslims in the American Public Square project, which was granted \$1.25 million by the Pew Charitable Trust to study Muslim-American engagement in public life. He coedited one of the project's publications, Muslims' Place in the American Public Square, which appeared in 2004, after which he became director of American Muslim studies at Georgetown University. In a 2000 interview with the Muslim American Society, excerpted below, Bukhari answered questions about the Muslim-American vote in the upcoming election, but rather than focusing on handicapping individual political races, Bukhari attempted to articulate a vision for Muslim-American political activism that encompassed religious ideals and political strategies.*



Q: What role do you see Muslims in America playing in the future affairs of the Muslim world? Do Muslims in your view have an opportunity to influence American foreign policy?

A: The last decade of the twentieth century has witnessed a thriving, vibrant, and expanding Muslim community on the American civic horizon. The Muslim community in America, six million in number, is a replica of the more than one billion Muslims of the world. The community has at least three roles to perform on this continent.

One is to function as a minority group seeking to protect its rights. Another is to represent the larger Muslim Ummah [the global community of Muslims] by struggling to help out Muslims around the world in difficult times. The third responsibility of Muslims and the Muslim Ummah in America is to bring the wisdom of Islam to promote social justice and political responsibility in America for all citizens, as well as to participate in ecumenical efforts to restore America's spiritual underpinnings. The combination of these three roles has made the Muslim community a multiple agenda group instead of a single-agenda political-community.

The Muslim community in America possesses more financial, human, and high tech resources than any other Muslim community in the world. It is a fact that there are more professional Muslims in the United States than in any Muslim country. Interestingly enough and it may seem strange: the Muslims in America are also more active politically and Islamically than are Muslims in any other country. All these characteristics, plus being strategically placed in the belly of the sole super power of the world today, would give the Muslim community in America added effectiveness in its role as guardian for the future affairs of the Muslim World.

The Muslims in America are becoming a source of ideas, actions, and leadership in the following four areas that are shaping the future of the Muslim World:

1. Helping in the development of the basic physical and culture infrastructure, including education, health, information technology, management, polity, and cultural development of various Muslim countries;
2. Restructuring the fields of communication and channeling the flow of news from a Muslim perspective;
3. Facilitating civilizational dialogues between Islam and the West in general and the Muslim World and the United States of America in particular; and
4. Affecting American foreign policy toward the Muslim World.

In order to influence American foreign policy, the Muslim community has to be involved in the domestic affairs of the United States. I would like to give one example to underscore this point. The Muslims have a universal belief that Jewish groups

are controlling American foreign policy, at least in the Middle East. Half a century before achieving this “status,” the Jewish intellectuals and activists were also instrumental in shaping the domestic agenda of President Roosevelt.

The Muslim community should try to have a significant impact on this society. Three steps are necessary to achieve this goal.

Along with having advanced education in medicine, business administration, and computer sciences, the Muslims should also excel in the social sciences, law, communications, journalism, media, political science, sociology, and international relations. During this era of institution building, we should also plan to establish Muslim universities and hospitals, as well as think tanks and research centers for public policy in America.

We have Muslim advocacy groups, and their achievements are remarkable. The next stage, however, is to establish institutions working for social justice, not only for Muslims but also for the whole society. There is obvious *zulm* [wrongdoing and oppression] in the society in the shape of police brutality, hunger, homelessness, and broken families. The country also faces natural disasters of various types. The Muslim community, especially the relief organizations, should act collectively to eradicate the *zulm* and compete with other like-minded people and groups in promoting the good. Commitment to this purpose of Islam and Muslims in America is the best form of *da'wa* [missionary work].

In order to do all this, however, we must strengthen a unified voice of the Muslim community of America. The joint forum of the National Islamic Shura Council, which consists of the leadership of all major organizations, should become functional and it should establish an effective secretariat in Washington, D.C. The Muslim leadership in America should present the Muslim agenda for domestic and international affairs, which consists of common principles derived from the Revelation of Tawhid [Oneness] as applied through mutual consultation in evaluating and addressing specific issues of conscience, so that Americans can better address the underlying causes rather than merely the effects of disharmony and injustice in their society.

Inward unity and outward caring for the society will ultimately give the Muslim community an opportunity to lead America and influence American foreign policy toward the other peoples of the world.

Q: What percentage of the Muslim American population do you believe is eligible to vote? What percentage do you believe would actually vote if the elections were held today? Considering that we have been witnessing a decline in American voting, do you believe that the Muslim vote has a possibility of being a swing vote?

A: It is not a question of belief but a question of an estimate. Rather, in the absence of any authentic data, it can only be a mere guesstimate. Nevertheless, I can give you observations on the voting patterns and potentials of Muslims in America.

If we just look at the minimum voting age requirement of eighteen years, a vast majority of the Muslim population is eligible to vote. But four factors have curtailed their effectiveness in casting votes: 1) Many Muslim families are in the process of immigration, and it will take some time for them to become eligible for naturalization; 2) A good number of Muslims do not want to become citizens, either because they fear losing their home country citizenship or because they are convinced that the Pledge of Allegiance is against Islam; they prefer to be only green card holders, although the recent immigration laws passed by Congress have reduced substantially the number of Muslims in this category; 3) Ongoing conceptual and theoretical discussion on the issue of Muslims participating in a non-Muslim political system, and even on the compatibility of democracy with Islam, has made some individuals and groups, especially among indigenous and second generation Muslims, refrain from the voting process; 4) A great number of Muslims, who are eligible to vote but do not have any strong Fiqh [Islamic legal] reservations, still will not become registered voters. Why? The reasons may range from lack of any democratic practices in their home countries, lack of education on the importance of civic participation, and lack of procedural knowledge, to general apathy toward the prevailing political process!

The good news is that those Muslims who become registered voters tend to vote more conscientiously than the average American voter. As things are moving, especially the implementation of the recent immigration laws and increasing awareness among the members of the community, the number of eligible and registered voters will grow rapidly in the near future. There is definitely great potential that the Muslim vote, in a narrow sense, may

become a swing vote, but only after a concerted effort and a comprehensive strategy. In targeted primaries and constituencies, the Muslim voters could certainly affect the outcome of the elections.

Q: What is your opinion concerning the differences in the political ideals and methods of American-born Muslims and immigrant Muslims who are eligible to vote? Do you see one group as potentially more powerful than another? What are the common issues or views of these two groups as you see them?

A: The American Muslim community is diverse. First of all, it is divided into Ansar and Muhajir (indigenous and immigrant Muslims). Among the indigenous are Afro-American and Caucasian-American Muslims, and their aspirations vary. Among immigrants, there are Arab and Ajam (non-Arab) Muslims, who have different socio-political experiences. Second-generation Muslims are also an important element of the community composition. All these sub-groups of the Muslim community have their distinct political ideas and feelings. The alarming fact is that the two main groups, indigenous and immigrants are living side by side like *maraj al-bahrain*, two different oceans, with an invisible but strong barrier between them.

The Muslim immigrants are experienced and resourceful, and their suburban Islamic centers have grandiose structures. They have the habit of looking at a great variety of issues, both international and domestic. The indigenous Muslims, on the other hand, are less resourceful and their inner-city masjids [mosques] have more humble structures, but they have more connection with the masses. They tend to see problems from the domestic perspective. For immigrants, Palestine, Kashmir, Bosnia, Kosova, and disasters in the Muslim world are more important, whereas the indigenous Muslims would give more importance to the local community's socio-economic conditions. This does not mean that the immigrants do not care about the domestic problems, or that the indigenous Muslims do not bother with the Ummah's crisis. But they have different preferences.

My strong belief is that both groups of the Muslim community, immigrants and indigenous, need to learn from each other's experience. Only by working together will they be able to achieve any meaningful success in the political field.

Q: Will the American public view Muslim political participation as a threat to the secular establishment in America? Do you see Islamic political activism as secular or religious in nature?

A: Muslim political activism is a religious activism but it should encompass all faiths and all sectors of society. Public perception depends upon our behavior and how others will portray us in the media and other political channels. Much of the American public is hostile to any overly religious political overtures. We should adopt a strategy of selective alliance, working with various political and religious groups on different issues. If Muslims present themselves only as the champion of Muslims' rights and not as the champion of justice, domestically and internationally, the American public would certainly feel wary of us. I would suggest that Muslims should follow the fine balance of the American Constitution, which stands for separation of church and state, on the one hand, in order to protect religious minorities from political oppression by the majority, and, on the other hand, guarantees individual freedom for everyone to bring one's religious principles, wisdom, and commitment to bear in the public square.

Q: Are there any possibilities of reconciliation between Muslim Americans and the Christian Right? Do you see a faith-based coalition as a possible influence in the Year 2000 elections?

A: My answer to both of the questions is negative. I would not rule out any positive development in the long run, but any reconciliation between Muslims in America and the Christian Right is not possible in near future. In the same way, I do not see the development of an influential faith-based coalition, at least not in the Year 2000 elections.

Q: Which party would benefit the most from Muslim political participation, and why? In your opinion is Islamic politics more compatible with American liberalism or American conservatism?

A: Before determining which party would benefit the most from Muslim political participation, one should look at the basis of Muslim activism and also examine which party has more capacity to attract this activism.

Three sets of issues are significant in determining the political affiliation of Muslims in America:

1) race, rights, and welfare; 2) values and religious issues; and 3) American policy in foreign and international conflicts, especially where Muslims are involved, whether or not they identify ethnically with one side or the other. Two more factors, namely, the image of the party and personality of a candidate, are also important in determining the level of political participation by an ethno-religious group.

Both American parties have distinct policy-mixes in their bids for Muslim participation. Democrats have an edge through primarily “secular issues,” as the champion of immigrants and minority rights, to attract more Muslim votes, although some traditionalist or paleo-conservatives are the most articulate in heralding the benefits of open immigration. Republicans could claim more Muslim affiliation as the party of values, family traditions, and religious rights. Its presidential hopeful, George Bush Jr., could charm more Muslim votes compared to any of his rivals. Looking at the year 2000, the Republican Party seems to be harvesting more fruit from Muslim participation at the presidential level, while the Democratic Party will enjoy more benefits at the level of Congress. If Muslims keep their options open, however, and are involved in both parties at the grassroots level, the American society would, ultimately, be the greatest beneficiary of their participation in the political arena.

In response to your second question about the relative attraction of liberalism versus conservatism for Muslim political activists, I do not see any Muslim politics here. There is Muslim activism on the basis of international issues, minority rights, and perhaps issues of a welfare safety net. Muslim politics would be compatible with either liberalism or conservatism depending upon the nature of the issue and the debate of the day. Islamic politics would seem to be more compatible with conservatism because of religious and value issues, but becomes more compatible with American liberalism when the issues of rights, race, and the welfare of small groups are taken into consideration.

**Q:** Comparing the Muslim American community with the American Jewish community, what are their commonalities and differences, particularly with respect to their foreign policy interests? Do you see Jews and Muslims sharing similar objectives on domestic issues?

**A:** Once an editor of *Newsday*, a major metropolitan newspaper of New York City, stated to a dele-

gation of Muslim leaders that Muslims in America are at the same stage where Jewish people were in 1920. My response, as a member of the delegation, was that, because of the advancements achieved by Jewish, Afro-American, and other minority groups, the Muslim community will be catching up very fast.

Jews suffered and struggled along with other minority groups and ultimately, after a long and continuous effort, they are now enjoying the present state of influence. Not only are they able to mold American foreign policy, but are successful in the fields of education, media, entertainment, medicine, health, law, and business. Advancement in all the nerve centers of a society is required in order to play a significant role in the decision-making process.

Both groups have faced the same problems during the immigration and post-immigration periods. Settling in a new and sometimes hostile cultural environment, establishing religious, educational, and political institutions, facing family problems, fulfilling the dietary requirements, and experiencing controversies over the opinions of imported scholars are all familiar stories for both of them. As I stated earlier, if Muslims adopt a strategy of selective alliance on domestic issues, they will soon see Jewish groups as effective partners.

Foreign policy interests are really thorny issues in the whole equation. The Jewish community, in contrast to the Muslim community, is a single-agenda entity in so far as it considers itself the sole guardian of Israel's security. Some of their individuals and groups have nourished, unfortunately, a conception of perpetual animosity for Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims, and even for Islam. I should also say that reciprocally this also is true for some of the Muslim individuals and groups. This state of affairs needs to be addressed. Because it is a multiple agenda community and because it focuses on bettering the larger society, the Muslim community in America is in a position to change this misconception and thereby benefit.



*Source:* Muslim American Society. “Muslims in American Society: Interview with Zahid Bukhari.” Available online. URL: [www.masnet.org/contempissue.asp?id=1763](http://www.masnet.org/contempissue.asp?id=1763). Accessed February 10, 2009.



## prayer

Muslims in the United States subscribe to diverse schools of ISLAMIC THOUGHT and come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. It is no surprise, then, that there are a variety of religious traditions of devotion and piety among them. While the prescribed prayer involving the prostration of the body toward Mecca, called *salat* or *namaz*, is most often associated with “Muslim prayer,” Muslim Americans have prayed in a variety of ways since they first arrived on American soil centuries ago during the colonial era.

### DIVERSITY OF MUSLIM PRAYER TRADITIONS

Prayer in Muslim experience is expressed through shared rituals of piety such as the recitation of the QUR’AN, acts of supplication (*du’a*), prayers asking for God’s blessings upon the prophet MUHAMMAD (*salawat*), and rituals glorifying the Divine (*tasbih*). Prayer also includes practices that are particular to various Muslim communities. These include the *DHIKR* rituals of various Sufi and mystically oriented communities, ‘Ashura commemorations of Twelver SHI’A MUSLIM AMERICANS, *majlis* gatherings of the DRUZE COMMUNITY, the recitation of religious poetry among various Muslim Sufi communities, including the BEKTASHI SUFI ORDER, and the canonic *du’a* among the Nizari branch of the ISMA’ILI MUSLIM AMERICAN community. Likewise, Muslim prayer does not only take place in MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS but does and has historically occurred in the home and in spaces designated as Sufi lodges, *IMAMBARGAHS*, and *JAMAATKHANAS* in the American context.

### PRAYERS OF AMERICA’S EARLIEST MUSLIMS

The first Muslim prayers in America were performed by the thousands of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES who arrived in the Thirteen Colonies and the United States from the 17th to the 19th centuries. For example, JOB BEN SOLOMON (ca. 1701–1773), a slave who lived in Maryland from 1730 to 1733, kept his daily prayers even in the midst of harassment; he told his biographer Thomas Bluett that when he would go to the woods to pray, a white boy would make fun of him and throw dirt in his face. Job, as he was commonly known, was only one of many literate, educated, and highly pious slaves who preserved their Islamic rituals after having been stolen away to the Americas.

Included in these rituals were various prayers that they had learned from West African SUFISM, the inclination and practice of mysticism in Islam. For example, BILALI OF SAPELO ISLAND (ca. 1760–1859) and his wife, Phoebe, “prayed on the bead,” performing *dhikr*, a meditative form of prayer in which the believer recites the names of God or a series of prescribed formulas. According to one of his heirs, Bilali would repeat words of devotion to God and his prophet, Muhammad, pulling on a long string of prayer

beads that was likely used by the Qadiri Sufi order in West Africa.

While the slave trade introduced America to many of its earliest Muslims, the first Muslim immigrants arrived in the late 19th century and later coalesced into communities based around linguistic affiliation—many coming from ARABIC-speaking regions that today would include Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine. Many of these Arab pioneers settled in the American Midwest and on the East Coast. Some were Sunni Muslims, who constitute 80 to 85 percent of the world’s Muslims, while others subscribed to Shi’a Ithna ‘Ashari beliefs or belonged to the Druze faith, each of which had its own specific prayer systems and acts of devotion.

### SUNNI PRAYERS

SUNNI MUSLIM AMERICANS, like their counterparts from other communities, hail from all parts of the Muslim world and include a large number of indigenous Americans who converted beginning in the early 20th century. While the earliest purpose-built mosques did not appear until the 1920s, it is clear that WHITE MUSLIM AMERICANS such as ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB, ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, and SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS were performing the daily prayers in rented halls and homes by the late 19th century.

While the SHARI’A, or code of Muslim law and ethics, permits Muslims to perform the prayer individually, it is expected that Muslim males will come together to perform *salat al-jum’a*, the midday congregational prayers on Friday. This ritual, when performed in public, often begins with the *ADHAN*, or the call to prayer, in which a muezzin beckons the faithful to come to worship, adding in the early morning that “prayer is better than sleep.” Though the call to prayer was surely performed before the 19th century in North America, some of the first recorded instances of its public performance came in 1893: once at the Chicago World’s Fair, or the COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893, and once from a third-story window of the Union Square Bank building in NEW YORK CITY.

Many Muslims also perform a series of ablutions, called *wudu*, in which they ritually purify themselves before making their prayers, washing their mouth, nose, ears, head, arms, and feet with water, or sand where water is not available. The prayer ritual then performed, called the *salat*, is the best-known form of Muslim prayer and is considered by Sunni Muslims to be incumbent upon all believers. The person offering prayers begins by positioning his or her body in the direction of Mecca, the holy city. He or she stands, hands held near the sides of one’s head, and recites that “God is most great.” Then, the hands are dropped to the side of the body or folded in front of the chest, and other verses from the Qur’an are recited. The believer next bows at the waist,



| SALAT SCHEDULE |          |
|----------------|----------|
| FAJR           | 5 45 AM  |
| JUMAH          | 1 30 PM  |
| DUHR           | 2 00 PM  |
| ASR            | 5 45 PM  |
| MAGHRAB        | SUNSET   |
| ISHA           | 10 15 PM |

Prayer times, August 2008. Muslims who practice *salat*, prescribed prayers involving a series of prostrations and the recitation of Qur'anic passages and other holy words, often pray five times throughout the day. This sign also includes the time for *jumah*, the congregational prayers held each Friday in lieu of the *duhr* prayer. (Photograph courtesy of Edward E. Curtis IV)

and then touches his or her head to the ground. Rising, but still sitting on the knees, he or she turns left and then to the right, and after reciting several additional lines of spoken prayer, concludes by saying to his or her fellow Muslims, "Peace and mercy of God be upon you." This is considered a prayer cycle and is performed throughout the day.

In addition to the *salat*, many Muslims participate in a range of additional prayers that form part of the ritual life of their communities. On auspicious days of the Muslim calendar, such as the birthday of prophet Muhammad, the night of power (*laylat al-qadr*), and the night journey of the Prophet from Mecca to Jerusalem to heaven and back (*laylat 'isra wa' l mi'raj*), many communities also observe special *salat*, supplicatory prayers, recitation of the Qur'an, and personal reflection and meditative contemplation.

#### SHI'A PRAYERS

Ithna 'Ashari, or Twelvers, the largest and most prominent Shi'a Muslim community, as well as a number of other Shi'a communities, also perform the *salat*. The majority combine their prayers into three sessions rather than five, although still observing five *salat* per day as Sunni Muslims do. Since the early 20th century, Shi'a Muslim Americans have also participated in religious processions and prayer gatherings organized during the month of Muharram and especially on its tenth day called 'Ashura. At this time a number of solemn observances take place to commemorate the seventh-century martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali, the Shi'a imam and grandson

of the Prophet. This occasion, filled with intense emotion, was one of the most important days in the Shi'a calendar and has attracted men and women from the entire community.

In addition to the recitation of the *salat*, lamentation songs (*nawhas* and *rawzas*) were sung, extolling the virtues of the family of the Prophet and relating the tragic stories and events of Karbala leading to Husayn's death. Later, in the 1960s, when mosques, Islamic centers, and *imambar-gahs* were constructed, the ritual life of the Shi'a Twelvers expanded to formally include a range of other activities that were observed in addition to the daily *salat*, such as gathering to recite the prayers of *Kumayl*, believed to have been given by their first imam, Ali (father of Husayn ibn Ali), to one of his companions, and greetings of peace (*salam*) to the Shi'a imams. These institutions were further strengthened by the settlement of Iranian Shi'a Muslims beginning in the 1960s, followed by Twelvers from the Indian subcontinent.

The Nizari branch of the Isma'ilis, another Shi'a Muslim community, began arriving in the United States in the 1950s. This community, as part of their canonical prayers, observe the recitation of the *du'a*, an Arabic prayer of supplication recited in their own spaces of communal congregation known as the *jamaatkhana*. Introduced to the worldwide Isma'ili community beginning in 1954 by their 48th imam, AGA KHAN III, Sir Sultan Mohamed Shah, this unified prayer replaced a number of diverse supplications in a multitude of languages observed by the community based on their regional backgrounds.

#### MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE AND THE NATION OF ISLAM

The MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America (MST), established by NOBLE DREW ALI in 1925 in Chicago, adopted most of the forms of their prayer rituals from African-American Christian traditions and those of the Shriners, an American fraternal organization. In their Philadelphia temple in the early 1940s, for example, they held Friday prayer services in which they chanted a song, "Moslem's That Old Time Religion" to the tune of a Christian hymn, "Give Me That Old Time Religion."

The service, which was described by anthropologist Arthur Huff Fauset as a generally quiet and contemplative religious service, also incorporated recitations of *The Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America* (1927), a sacred text composed by their prophet, Noble Drew Ali, with few similarities to the Qur'an. Participants concluded the service with the prayer: "Allah, Father of the Universe, the father of Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom, and Justice. Allah is my protector, my Guide, and my Salvation by night and by day, through His Holy Prophet, Drew Ali. Amen." Though many of those words may have been acceptable to other Muslims, the idea that Drew Ali was a prophet was rejected by many

other Muslim Americans at the time, including Sudanese missionary SATTI MAJID.

The NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), founded by W. D. FARD in Detroit in 1930 and led for many decades by ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, incorporated a greater number of Sunni Muslim traditions in its prayer rituals, although it also developed its own words to the prayers. In 1957, Muhammad published a prayer manual that described each step of the *salat*, the prescribed prayer. He advised his believers to perform the prayer five times a day, but to do so in English rather than in Arabic. Some NOI members also learned the prayers in Arabic and performed them, although they did so alone rather than collectively.

Prayers at NOI temple meetings were said in English, and members performed them from their seats, not on the floor as many other Muslims do. In the 1960s, the NOI newspaper, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, featured a regular column called "Prayer Service in Islam" that began to incorporate new and original prayers into the *salat*, including the recitation of beliefs that W. D. Fard was God. In the 1960s, NOI leaders explained the difference between their prayer rituals and those of other Muslims as those of interpretation. Unless the words of the prayer were understood, they said, it could become hollow and meaningless.

#### SUFI PRAYERS

American Sufi orders, organizations that often advocate a more emotional or mystical relationship with God through the use of various rituals, have cut across many Muslim-American social boundaries and have both Sunni and Shi'a Muslim adherents. The orders often differ over the question of whether members must formally commit to Islam as a religious conviction or simply remain true to its values while permitting individuals to belong to other traditions or faiths. The most common form of practice shared by most of these esoteric-oriented communities is the *dhikr*, or the remembrance of God through repetitions of God's names and through formulas that invoke God's beauty, uniqueness, and transcendent nature. These invocations can be recited silently or aloud, privately or collectively, and are sometimes accompanied by the recitation of religious songs (*nashid*), the playing of musical instruments, and through dance. For the HALVETI-JERRAHI ORDER, for example, it also involves rhythmic bodily movement and complex systems of breathing to further call upon God and induce a mystical encounter. In addition to the *dhikr*, another almost ubiquitous practice is the spiritual discourse or teaching lesson between spiritual leaders and their followers in hope of guiding them through the states of spiritual development and toward a closer relationship with the Divine. While some of these practices complement the *salat*, certain groups have their own canonical prayers which transcend the more common practices of Sunni and Shi'a Muslims.

#### CONCLUSION

The diverse forms of prayer among Muslim Americans are testament to the religious, ethnic, and social diversity of American Islam. Distinctly American prayers sit alongside prayer systems that are traced back to the time of the prophet Muhammad in the sixth and seventh centuries. The sheer variety of prayer among Muslim Americans shows that there is no one type of Muslim in the United States and suggests that the diversity of Islamic religious practice is one source of its growth and spread as an American religion.

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#### prison

Considering the large number of inmates who have converted to Islam in prison and later reentered society, a sizeable portion of the Muslim-American community has been shaped by America's penal system. America's state and federal prisons stand as a microcosm of the country's larger Muslim society and culture. As with the outside world, Islam within prison walls has given many men and women a source of hope, identity, and sense of community.



Yet incarcerated Muslims have faced many more difficulties than their free counterparts in gaining access to religious resources and the freedom to worship. Muslim Americans have often led the struggle for constitutional rights, protections, and the liberty to practice their religion inside prisons since the middle of the 20th century, and though many advances have been made, conditions are still often restricted. For just one example, a federal court ruled in 2003 that New Jersey State Prison is not obligated to supply Muslim prisoners with HALAL meals, or those that are permissible according to the SHARI'A, or Islamic LAW. Nevertheless, the history of Muslim-American involvement in the country's prisons provides a rich understanding of the community's ministry, practices, and engagement with the larger society and culture.

### NATION OF ISLAM PRISON MINISTRIES

The Muslim American prison ministry began with NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD in the 1940s. Muhammad was arrested in 1942 along with several other NOI members for evading WORLD WAR II draft laws. Though most of the defendants were sentenced to three years in prison, the Federal Bureau of Investigation raised the charges to sedition against Muhammad and two other NOI followers.

Muhammad was subsequently housed at the federal correctional institution in Milan, Michigan, until his release in 1946. During this time, his wife, Clara, oversaw the NOI and relayed communications from Muhammad to his followers at Detroit's Temple No. 1. While in prison, Muhammad's experiences led to his desire for NOI independence and self-sufficiency as well as an interest in spreading his message through print and radio media. While in prison, moreover, Muhammad came to believe an insufficient amount of attention was given to rehabilitating African-American inmates. After his release, this concentration on prisoners became a central component of the NOI program.

The experiences of MALCOLM X in prison are undoubtedly the best-known of any Muslim American's. Malcolm X was arrested in January 1946 and charged with breaking and entering, larceny, and carrying firearms. Originally sentenced to Massachusetts's Charlestown Prison, Malcolm X was initially hostile toward religion until his brothers, Philbert and Reginald, introduced him to Elijah Muhammad's teachings. Beginning his conversion to Islam in 1947, Malcolm X started corresponding with Muhammad after his transfer to the more progressive Norfolk Prison Colony in 1948. In the following years, he became an ardent supporter of Muhammad, and on his parole and release in 1952, Malcolm X was integrated into the NOI community. Like Muhammad's, Malcolm X's experiences in prison convinced him of the need and fertile potential for outreach to African-American inmates.

Although more inmates were converting to Sunni Islam than to the NOI by the 21st century, the NOI was instrumental in establishing a uniquely Muslim-American prison ministry. One reason for this success—and still seen to this day in faith-based outreach to prisoners—was the NOI's consistent propagation carried out by members outside the prison as well as by those inmates who had already joined the faith. In the 1950s, the NOI built up its organization in the country's state and federal prisons, primarily by recruiting and educating new converts through the distribution of literature. NOI members wrote to inmates and encouraged further correspondence, often with Elijah Muhammad himself.

By the 1960s, the NOI was a powerful force in America's prison system and had the sympathy of many African-American prisoners. It is estimated that the NOI counted as many as 100,000 members by 1960, many of whom were in prison, though the FBI insisted that the organization had only 5,000 members. The NOI provided inmates with a sense of identity, belonging, and community; resources for education and rehabilitation; a highly organized protective network that offered security; and assistance for those reentering society. Yet the NOI also required inmates to embrace discipline and personal responsibility. Islam therefore played a significant part in the reform and personal transformation of countless prisoners.

Often, inside prisons the process of conversion and identification as Muslim followed a pattern. Generally, inmates considering converting to Islam were first provided with information familiarizing them with the faith. Then, once the decision to convert was made, inmates recited the *shahada*, or declaration of faith, in front of witnesses and thereby entered into the community of Muslim inmates. Next, recent converts normally changed their appearance in DRESS and facial hair (where allowed) as well as their names to match traditional standards. By this point, they would also participate fully in both individual and collective activities such as praying five times daily, attending Friday prayer, studying the Arabic language and QUR'AN, and fasting during Ramadan. Through all of these practices Muslim inmates demonstrated both a personal commitment to their faith and solidarity with the larger Muslim community.

### GROWING DIVERSITY

Initially, prison administrators viewed Islam in general and the NOI in particular as problematic and even threatening movements and consequently attempted to restrict their practice. However, beginning in the 1960s and continuing into the 21st century, Muslim Americans frequently turned to the courts and filed lawsuits in their struggle for religious rights and freedom of practice with many cases settling in their favor. Several of these rulings, supported by legal and financial assistance from Muslim Americans outside prison,



involved the definition of religion and application of the First Amendment pertaining to freedom of religion, with defendants arguing that prison authorities discriminated against non-Christian and non-Jewish faiths.

Claiming constitutional protection, Muslim Americans took legal action on several issues such as rights to PRAYER, diet, space for worship and services, literature, chaplains and religious counseling, grooming, and dress. Because of these cases, Muslim Americans in many states won the right to wear beards and kufis in addition to having pork-free diets, halal FOOD, and iftar (the daily meal held after sundown during Ramadan). Muslim-American efforts were largely responsible both for obtaining constitutional liberties and protections for prisoners of all faiths as well as bringing prison conditions to the attention of the general public. Furthermore, administrators came to see Islam positively and began to promote rather than hinder its practice in prisons. Ultimately, Muslim Americans, in challenging what they saw as the injustices of America's penal system, stood at the vanguard of this distinctive area in the civil rights movement.

The increase in Muslim immigrants and converts in America in the second half of the 20th century is paralleled in the country's prison population. By the first decade of the 21st century, America's prisons housed between 300,000 and 400,000 Muslims with approximately 30,000 or more added or converted each year. With this growth came a need for trained imams, material resources, and community support. Though more recently Muslim CHAPLAINS were working with those of other faiths to promote equal access and opportunity, this state of affairs did not always exist. Even at the turn of the century it was not uncommon for Christian and Jewish chaplains to fulfill the roles of spiritual mentors to Muslim inmates or for inmates to go without Qur'ans and spaces designated for Muslim worship and services.

As a result, Muslim Americans formed a number of organizations that existed at least in part to remedy this problem. The National Association of Muslim Chaplains, the Junior Association of Muslim Men, and the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) aimed to prepare men and women for prison ministry and counseling as well as to provide religious, educational, and post-prison support programs for inmates. Groups such as the Propagación Islámica para la Educación y Devoción de Ala' el Divino (PIEDAD) and the Alianza Islamica formed in the 1980s to assist incarcerated Latina and Latino Muslims. Many smaller Islamic centers, mosques, and Sufi groups were also involved with prison outreach.

#### AFTER 9/11

Since the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, the presence of some groups and individuals seeking to spread WAHHABISM, create terrorist cells, and generally radicalize

inmates came to the attention of both prison authorities and Muslim-American leaders. In 2004, the U.S. Department of Justice issued a report warning of the rise in Islamic extremism and fundamentalism among Muslim-American inmates that combined religious intolerance with racial hostility. Though the situation was difficult given the lack of qualified and eligible imams, Muslim-American organizations such as ISNA and Hartford Seminary's Muslim chaplaincy program, in addition to both state and federal prison chaplains, attempted to confront such extremism by providing religious guidance and religious literature and by assisting ex-prisoners with reintegration into society.

By the 21st century, incarcerated Muslim Americans were able to engage freely in a number of religious practices and represented a broad range of Islamic beliefs and groups. Religious affiliation inside America's prisons mirrored that of the larger culture, with Muslim inmates identifying as Sunni, Shi'a, Sufi, NOI, and MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America. Often each group had access to the resources particular to that affiliation. However, in many cases, such as in New York's Fishkill Correctional Facility and South Carolina state prisons, prison systems provided only Sunni chaplains, programs, and literature for their diverse population of Muslim inmates. Grouping together such diverse religious populations has sometimes resulted in lawsuits by non-Sunni Muslim prisoners fighting for the right to practice Islam in the way that they understood it. Muslim Americans in prison compose a distinctive and significant subculture within the larger community while simultaneously mirroring its diversity. At the beginning of the 21st century, it is as of yet unclear what effect the presence and fear of radical Islam will have on constitutional protections and rights to religious freedom in America's penal system. However, it is certain that Muslim Americans both inside and outside prison will continue to shape its history and development.

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## progressive Muslims

The proliferation of violent extremist groups such as al-Qaeda, which was responsible for the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, has been accompanied by a politically and religiously progressive response among Muslim Americans. In the period following 9/11, progressive Muslim voices in the United States have broadcast a very different understanding of Islam, using the INTERNET, public speeches, and Friday congregational PRAYER meetings to reach the general public and the Muslim-American community. Although one cannot point to a single progressive Muslim agenda, progressive Muslims became known for a willingness to question time-honored Islamic traditions that they found to be unjust. At the same time, they criticized the West's tendency to use violence and economic leverage to achieve its foreign policy objectives. This was an unusual political position that pitted progressive Muslims against those who were unwilling to question their views of Islam—whether these views were positive or negative.

Progressive Muslims wished to maintain continuity with the Islamic tradition, but they believed in the importance of examining tradition critically. The process of critical examination involves rethinking how to read and understand traditional sources such as the QUR'AN and the hadith, the reports of prophet Muhammad's sayings and deeds and those of his companions. Progressive Muslims have advocated reading sacred texts in light of the historical context of their revelation. To read sources in reference to their historical context is to take account of the significant differences that exist between premodern and modern cultures.

Progressive Muslims have thought that such differences ought to and do affect how Muslims practice their religion. For example, they have argued that the status of women in many countries differs from the status of women in seventh-century Arabia, and thus Islamic laws and cultural attitudes should reflect this change. A historically contextualized type of reading is opposed to a literalist reading of sources, in which cultural norms and customs described in the Qur'an and hadith are interpreted as timeless norms. Progressive Muslims believe in the possibility of a multiplicity of interpretations inherent in the Qur'an and in the Islamic legal

tradition. Dialogue and disagreement, they argue, are a vital part of the Islamic tradition as a living tradition.

In addition to producing scholarship on Islam, progressive Muslims have engaged in political activism. Progressive Muslims address not only Islam as it is practiced in the United States but also Islam as a global phenomenon. One reason for this is that many progressive Muslims were born overseas and then came to the United States as adults. Legal scholar KHALED ABOU EL FADL (1963– ), for example, was trained in SHARI'A, or the Islamic legal sciences, in Egypt and Kuwait before coming to the United States for graduate study. Abou El Fadl writes and teaches extensively on topics related to Islamic LAW and human rights. His books include *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority, and Women* (2001), *Religion and Violence in Islamic Law* (2001), and *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy* (2004). Abou El Fadl has claimed that Islam and democracy are compatible and complementary.

Another progressive Muslim whose thought has been very influential in the United States and abroad is Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, who was born in Northern Sudan. Like Abou El Fadl, An-Na'im was trained in Islamic legal theory. He received his education in law from the University of Khartoum, Sudan, and during this time he joined the Islamic reform movement of Mahmoud Mohamed Taha of the Republican Brothers. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Taha espoused a progressive approach to interpreting the Qur'an and shari'a in the Sudan.

But Taha's emphasis on reform clashed with Sudan's military regime of Ja'far Nimeiri, and Taha was executed in 1985. After Taha's death, An-Na'im moved to the United States, where he could pursue more freely scholarship and political activism involving human rights and Islamic legal theory. Becoming a professor at Emory University in ATLANTA, An-Na'im has been engaged in worldwide human rights advocacy and written several books, including *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights, and International Law* (1990) and *Islam and the Secular State: Negotiating the Future of Shari'a* (2008).

Other progressive Muslims are indigenous to the United States, including AMINA WADUD (1952– ). Born in Maryland, Amina Wadud is an African-American Muslim who has written extensively on the topic of Islam and gender justice and published a book on feminist Qur'anic exegesis, *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* (1999). In that book, Wadud examines scriptures that have traditionally been read and interpreted as oppressive of women and writes with the explicit purpose of empowering women by offering new interpretations of the sacred text. A feminist activist, Wadud has also broken the taboo against women's leadership of mixed gender prayers. On March 18, 2005, Wadud led a Friday prayer service in the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in NEW YORK CITY.

Wadud drew criticism from both moderate and conservative Islamic groups for her action, though the Progressive Muslim Union (PMU) endorsed her action.

The work of white Muslim American Kecia Ali has represented another angle on gender and Islamic cultures, specifically Islamic jurisprudence. In her book, *Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith, and Jurisprudence* (2006), Ali has written about Islamic practices of marriage and divorce, calling attention to the ways in which traditional Islamic jurisprudence has privileged MEN over WOMEN.

Some progressive Muslims have created groups and Web sites as a form of political activism and social education. One such group is the Progressive Muslim Union (PMU). Originally founded in 2004, the PMU has since struggled due to a lack of consensus of its members regarding the approach that progressive Muslims should take to questions about religion, politics, and economics, especially with regard to UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS with the Middle East. Other progressive Muslim voices have chosen to express their views through a Web site, ProgressiveIslam.org, that is a self-described "super blog" for Muslims of theological and ethnic diversity. The Web site has articulated its purpose as an informal group of Muslims working together through intellectual debate and discussion. Another group represented on the Internet, Muslims for Progressive Values (MPV), has declared that Islam is compatible with progressive social views. This group has claimed that it is not interested in the reform of Islamic tradition, but rather that it wants to change how Muslims perceive their religion in terms of social justice issues and the separation of church and state.

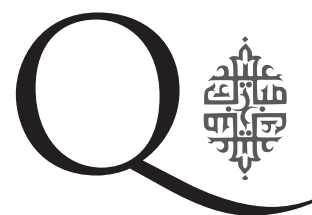
Progressive Muslims in the United States have represented a constituency of Muslims who have voiced dissatisfaction with neoconservative and politically radical Islamic groups. They have sought to diminish the pervasive global influence of such groups through engagement with Islamic textual traditions as well as political and social activism. These scholars and activists have disagreed at times about the nature of reform in the Islamic tradition, but overall as a collective group they have espoused a pluralistic view in which identities that are both Western and Islamic are not only possible but inevitable.

Shannon Dunn

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**punk music** See TAQWACORE.



### Qadiri-Rifa'i Sufi Order

One of the many manifestations of SUFISM, the mystical and pietistic branch of Islam that seeks to bring believers to closer, more personal relationship with God, the Qadiri-Rifa'i Sufi Order has a spiritual lineage reaching back to Abdul Qadir Geylani and Ahmed al-Rifa'i, the 12th-century founders of the two largest Sufi orders in the world, the Qadiris and Rifa'is. The joint Qadiri-Rifa'i Sufi Order was established in the early 20th century by religious master Muhammad Ansari in Istanbul. His goal was to teach *tasawwuf*, or Sufism, in a way that would make the tradition relevant in the modern world.

His school of thought was introduced to the United States in the 1980s by Turkish religious master Taner Ansari. The Qadiri-Rifa'i Order attracted its first members in Kalamazoo, Michigan, where Ansari had previously been a university student and founding member of the local chapter of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION in the middle 1960s. The movement did not grow significantly until Ansari decided in the 1990s to relocate to Napa, California, where the order established a permanent center. There its membership numbered perhaps in the hundreds.

In the 1990s, the order also began to publish the *Call of the Divine*, a print newsletter. Ansari also formally incorporated his own press to publish works related to Sufism, including his original writings. He was a regular speaker at the annual Sufism Symposium hosted by the International Association of Sufism.

Members, who included converts to Islam and persons born Muslim from a variety of religious, national, and ethnic backgrounds, participated in local interfaith councils and community projects. Like many other Muslims, they observed various components typical of Muslim RELIGIOUS LIFE, including fasting during Ramadan, giving alms, and performing the *salat*, the form of prayer that involves a series of bodily prostrations and recitation of various Qur'anic verses and other sacred words. But as a Sufi order whose goal is to know God directly, the Qadiri-Rifa'i also emphasized the need for persistent reflection and the purification of the heart and the cleansing of the ego (*nafs*) through recitation of the 99 names of God. Qadiri-Rifa'i *DHIKR*, or prayer of

remembrance, is often accompanied by poetry, music, and movement when performed in a congregation. In addition, the order put great emphasis on the relationship between the disciple and the teacher or spiritual master that is formally established when each member is initiated into the order.

During the first decade of the 21st century, the order moved its international headquarters to Nassau, New York, where as of 2009, it was still in the process of building an ecologically sustainable retreat center. Leader Taner Ansari also moved to upstate New York where, using the INTERNET and other media, he has continued to teach his followers about Sufi healing and sustainable living. There are at least 13 teachers or centers associated with the movement in New York, California, Massachusetts, and Michigan, and in Australia, Bosnia, Mexico, South Africa, Tanzania, and the United Kingdom.

Melinda Krokus

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**Queen Noor** See NOOR, QUEEN.

### Qur'an

The Qur'an is the sacred scripture of Islam. According to traditions accepted as authentic by both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, the general outline of the origins and nature of the



Qur'an are uncontroversial: In the early decades of the seventh century C.E., MUHAMMAD ibn 'Abdallah, a pious merchant from a powerful tribe in the Arabian peninsula, began to receive visitations from a mysterious figure believed to be the angel identified as Gabriel in Jewish and Christian lore. The angel had been sent by God to Muhammad to vouchsafe to him an "ARABIC recitation," one that would not only communicate the Divine plan to Arabic-speaking peoples in their own tongue but that would also "correct" previous Near Eastern scriptures that had suffered corruption at the hands of unscrupulous sectarians.

Muhammad learned these recitations by heart and, in turn, taught them to a growing circle of followers. Throughout his prophetic career, which lasted from 610 to 632 C.E., literate members of Muhammad's circle wrote down portions of the recited text as an aid to memorization. Either during the Prophet's lifetime and under his direction, or shortly thereafter, the extant portions of the recitation were collected and arranged in substantially the form that was later officially recognized by the community of Muslim scholars. That authorized edition is the Qur'an in use among Sunnis and Shi'a today.

The word *qur'an* literally means "something recited" in Arabic. For the vast majority of Muslims around the world, the Qur'an is an aural experience that tends to supply the "soundtrack" for daily living. In Muslim-majority countries, one hears the Qur'an recited aloud in mosques during daily PRAYERS, in private homes on festive occasions (often performed by trained reciters), in shops, in taxicabs, on street corners—wherever a portable cassette or CD player may be found.

#### IN EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

The introduction of the Qur'an to the Western Hemisphere coincides with the importation of African slaves to both North and South America by European settlers. From the 15th to the 19th centuries, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch, and British colonists imported some 10 million Africans to the Americas to serve as slave labor. Of these European imperial powers, the British maintained the most durable and extensively developed presence in North America. According to historian Michael Gomez, nearly half of the 481,000 slaves brought by the British to these shores during the course of the trans-Atlantic trade hailed from parts of Africa that contained significant Muslim populations. He therefore estimates that thousands, if not tens of thousands, of these slaves were Muslim at the time of their importation.

Despite the size of this population, the conditions of African slavery in the Americas were not conducive to the establishment, practice, or propagation of Islam: Slaveholders were not keen to permit their charges to practice a religion

unless it was one that the slaveholders themselves were competent to oversee and to interpret to their advantage. Therefore, little material culture survives to bear witness to the role that the Qur'an may have played among Muslim slaves.

It is possible, however, that amulets containing Qur'anic inscriptions either survived the middle passage or were reproduced on plantations by those slaves who were familiar with West African conjure culture. Moreover, interviews conducted among the descendants of African slaves still living in the sea islands of Georgia in the 1930s produced intriguing recollections of individuals from prior generations who would pray on mats, facing east, at specified intervals each day. Some of those who did so were remembered to have made devotional use of a book that they otherwise kept hidden. Of course, as noted above, a "book" in material form would not be necessary for those who had portions of the Qur'an committed to heart.

One piece of evidence to support the assertion that there were indeed Africans enslaved in the Americas who kept the Qur'an "hidden" in their memories—if not in tangible form secreted among their material possessions—consists of a single handwritten page. One side of the document reads as follows: "The Lord's Prayer written in Arabic by Uncle Moreau (Omar) a native African, now owned by General Owen of Wilmington N. C. He is 88 years of age & a devoted Christian. Given to Mary Jones, at the Rockbridge Alum Springs, Rockbridge County Va. by Genl Owen July 27, 1857." On the reverse side of the page, in large Arabic script, one finds not the Lord's Prayer but the 110th Surah, or chapter, of the Qur'an: hand-drafted in ink with some minor interpolation. "Uncle Moreau" is believed by scholars to be one OMAR IBN SAID (1770–1864), a West African Muslim scholar who was sold into slavery in 1807 and who later authored a surviving autobiography. What "Uncle Moreau" or Omar intended when he wrote this page is unclear since the circumstances surrounding its production are unknown; nevertheless, its very existence justifies the inference that the Arabic Qur'an was able to lead a clandestine life among Muslims enslaved in the Americas.

Where open access to the Qur'an was permitted in early American history, it was not among African slaves, nor self-identifying Muslims, but among non-Muslims such as Thomas Jefferson. As a young man, Jefferson purchased his edition of the Qur'an in 1765 while studying law at the College of William and Mary. Directly translated into English from the Arabic text by the British Oriental Studies scholar George Sale, Jefferson's Qur'an had been published in London the previous year. Originally issued in that same city in 1734, its full title was *The Koran, Commonly Called the Alcoran of Mohammed*. By 1764, Sale's translation had to be reissued in two volumes in order to make room for a "Preliminary

Discourse" authored by the translator himself. This introduction offered the reader a broad overview of Islam in the space of roughly 200 pages. Sale's translation was the first scholarly edition of Islamic scripture to appear in English and, as such, remained the standard version in the United States until the 20th century.

#### IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY BLACK AMERICA

Indigenous American representations of the Qur'an found new expression through the religious imaginations of African Americans within a few decades of their emancipation from slavery in 1865. The form that these representations assumed reflected the prevailing conditions of blacks in the post-Reconstruction period of U.S. history, and especially the conditions of the approximately 1 million who abandoned life in the rural segregated South as sharecroppers and laborers to resettle in America's new industrial heartlands of the North and Midwest between 1920 and 1930. Spurred by the hope of escaping the poverty and racism that characterized life in the states of the old Confederacy, many African Americans migrated north only to encounter social and economic impediments that rivaled the inequities experienced under sharecropping. For some former slaves and their descendants, the Qur'an's linguistic and religious foreignness offered an alternative space of imagination in which to express a different identity from that which race, poverty, and compelled servitude had thrust upon them.

Among the first to claim the Qur'an as an emblem of African-American difference was NOBLE DREW ALI (1886–1929) and his MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America. In 1927, Ali published his own *Holy Koran*, a book that owes far more to theosophical texts popular among American practitioners of metaphysical religions in the first third of the 20th century than to the Qur'an of the prophet Muhammad. In terms of content, Ali's *Holy Koran* bears little resemblance to the Arabic recitations of the seventh century, but Ali's choice of title for his own text reflects the significance with which he invested the foreign-sounding name. By identifying his community's scripture with the founding text of an alien tradition, Ali was able to underscore the radical difference that he believed distinguished Americans of African descent from the dominant white, Protestant culture into which, generations before, they had been transported as slaves.

A second milestone in the history of the Qur'an as an emblem of African-American difference arose from an equally unexpected quarter: South Asia. There the combined efforts of British colonists and associated Christian missionaries had prompted a vigorous response on the part of some Muslims. In the early 20th century, the Ahmadiyya, a modernist Messianic movement, produced numerous polemical and scholarly tracts and some formidable scholarship—including

a translation of the Arabic Qur'an into English. Although it is unlikely that this translation was undertaken with an eye to its eventual export to North America, this is precisely what took place. After the movement split into two branches in 1914, one branch attempted to look westward for its future. This decision would have a lasting impact upon African-American religiosity and upon the history of the Qur'an in the United States.

The Ahmadiyya mission to America began in 1920, when Mufti Muhammad Sadiq arrived in the United States. He soon moved to DETROIT, MICHIGAN, and then to CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, where the new headquarters of AHMADI MUSLIM AMERICANS was located.

One of the group's main missionary goals was to distribute copies of his movement's English translation of the Qur'an. First published in 1917, the Ahmadi Qur'an contained the Arabic text with English renderings as well as annotations reflecting the doctrinal stance of its translator, Maulana Muhammad Ali. Muhammad Ali did not share the theory of prophecy that characterized Mufti Sadiq's branch of the Ahmadiyya, but this difference of opinion did not prevent Sadiq from overseeing the importation and distribution of Muhammad Ali's translation. Indeed, Sadiq's ability to get a copy of Muhammad Ali's Qur'an into the hands of Americans (mostly African Americans), Muslim and non-Muslim, Ahmadi or not, constitutes one of the most enduring legacies of his mission. With its bright green cover and gilt calligraphy, the Ahmadi Qur'an has an attractive and distinctive appearance; it is often conspicuously present in photographs taken of black Muslims from the 1920s to the present.

Beginning in the 1930s, African-American Muslims who chose to practice Sunni Islam sought to become more knowledgeable about the Qur'an. Often using an Ahmadi translation of the Qur'an, they looked to the scripture for guidance on everything from politics to personal appearance. A few rare African Americans, such as MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN, traveled abroad in the 1930s to learn more about the rudiments of Sunni Islamic tradition, including the Qur'an. Perhaps the first African-American religious leader to articulate a full-blown social philosophy based on the Qur'an was Daoud Ahmed Faisal, whose 1950 book on Islam discussed how passages from the Qur'an related to interfaith encounters in America and other topics central to postwar culture.

Though black Sunni Muslims constituted a vital portion of the African-American community, it was ELIJAH MUHAMMAD'S NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) that brought the Qur'an to the attention of most black Americans. Becoming leader of the Nation of Islam in the 1930s, Elijah Muhammad maintained a somewhat curious relationship to the holy book. While Muhammad relied heavily on the

Bible to explain his version of Islam, he also selected passages from the Qur'an to prove the Islamic authenticity of his message. In other words, the Qur'an served Muhammad as an emblem of African-American difference; the extent to which it may have formed his religious thinking, however, is open to question.

A similar stance toward the Qur'an can be observed in the career of Minister LOUIS FARRAKHAN (1933– ). Since recreating a version of the Nation of Islam in 1978, Farrakhan has consistently used verses from the Bible in his speeches and writing. In public appearances, however, Farrakhan has also brandished his iconic copy of Maulana Muhammad Ali's translation of the Qur'an. Moreover, Farrakhan based key portions of his most important speech, the address to the hundreds of thousands of African-American men who attended the 1997 MILLION MAN MARCH, on passages from the Qur'an, and he has increasingly incorporated the reciting of the Qur'an at Nation of Islam functions.

#### LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Despite the fact that the Qur'an remained of somewhat limited use in the Nation of Islam late into the 20th century, the majority of African-American Muslims—and Muslims of every other ethnic background—devoted increasing time, energy, and financial resources to studying, listening to, writing about, and publicizing the Qur'an in the 1970s and 1980s. While Muslim immigrants from the Middle East and South Asia, who had been arriving on American shores since the late 19th century, always relied on the Qur'an in their religious rituals and for other purposes, the new attention given to the Qur'an in this period was different in both its intensity and scope.

This new Muslim-American devotion to the Qur'an coincided with a more general religious revival in the United States during the 1970s and with the global Islamic revival of the same period. Supported financially by the oil-rich Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Muslim-American organizations and mosques began to distribute, often for free, English translations of the Qur'an and commentaries on the holy book. In addition to reciting and hearing others recite the Qur'an, an increasing number of Muslim Americans became devoted students of the text's meanings and their application to nearly any circumstance.

Though the Qur'an had been studied at American universities before this time, most leading scholars of the Qur'an worked in European universities. After 1965, however, increasing numbers of immigrants from Asia and Africa began to arrive in the United States, including notable scholars of Islam such as FAZLUR RAHMAN (1919–88). Rahman, who taught at the University of Chicago from 1969 to 1988, taught an entire generation of Muslim and non-Muslim

scholars about his own style of interpreting the Qur'an. By the end of the 20th century, several Muslim Americans had produced works of scholarship written for a general audience that often analyzed the potential meanings of particular Qur'anic passages illustrative of the Qur'anic message as a whole. Works representative of this genre included Fazlur Rahman's *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (1980), AMINA WADUD's *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* (1992), and Farid Esack's *The Qur'an: A Short Introduction* (2001).

In their sermons and books, Muslim-American leaders of every ethnic background urged their followers to study and follow the Qur'an. W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), one of the most influential African-American Sunni leaders of the late 20th century, often relied on passages of the Qur'an as a guide to personal ethics and community improvement. Based on his reading of the Qur'an, for example, he supported interfaith dialogue and interracial harmony while also maintaining that a strong sense of ethnic solidarity and personal responsibility were essential to the advancement of his predominantly African-American community.

The devotion to understanding the Qur'an and applying its lessons to daily life also developed among local communities. African-American Muslim females in South Central LOS ANGELES, for example, studied the Qur'an for guidance on how to deal with patriarchy in their mosques and in their marriages. Similarly, South Asian-American writer Asma Gull Hasan used passages from the Qur'an to argue with her grandfather about his patriarchal views of women. According to Hasan, her old-fashioned grandfather thought that the Qur'an favored men over women in both earthly and spiritual matters. But when Hasan challenged him to cite the passages that established this male superiority, he balked. According to Hasan's reading of the Qur'an, such verses do not exist.

#### AFTER 9/11

After the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, non-Muslims seemed to develop an equally intense fascination with the Qur'an—albeit for different reasons. Translations of the Qur'an became best sellers at bookstores around the country as many Americans sought to read the book for clues on how the 9/11 terrorists could commit such evil acts or simply to understand more about the religion. Many conservative and liberal commentators alike saw the Qur'an as a source of what they deemed to be Islamic intolerance. When U.S. Representative KEITH M. ELLISON (D-Minn.), the first Muslim elected to Congress, sought to be sworn in using Thomas Jefferson's copy of the Qur'an in 2006, a fellow representative, Virgil Goode (R-Va.), criticized the move as

an example of "infiltration by those who want to mold the United States into the image of their religion." Some members of the UNITED STATES MILITARY guarding Muslim prisoners at the detention center at GUANTÁNAMO BAY held similar views and desecrated the Qur'an by putting a volume of it in urine.

For Muslim Americans, protecting—at times, literally—the Qur'an after 9/11 became an important symbol of their struggle for recognition as full citizens and persons worthy of respect in the United States. Muslim Americans involved in INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS and other leaders sought to show that the Qur'an did not support the killing of innocents or the maltreatment of women or the forcible conversion of Jews and Christians. Muslim critics of terrorism often found fault in the improper interpretation of the Qur'an rather than in the text of the Qur'an itself. Through public speeches, outreach to schools, and the use of various media, Muslim Americans attempted to reassure their fellow citizens about their holy book. In its many translations and interpretations, the Qur'an remains the central text for Muslim Americans and Muslims around the world.

Peter Matthews Wright

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#### M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen "The Inner Qur'an" (1987)

*From the beginning of Islamic history, Muslims have sought to imbibe the inner meaning of the Qur'an. From the seventh century until today, they have viewed the Qur'an as a revelation that offers moral guidance and brings human beings closer to God's presence. The cultivation of God's presence by meditating upon the Qur'an has been particularly important for Sufi Muslims, who emphasize the development of a personal relationship with God. While Sufism was likely first brought to the Americas by West African Muslim slaves in the colonial era, Sufi missionaries first appeared in the United States at the beginning of the 20th century. After immigration restrictions were lifted in 1965, more Sufi missionaries came, including Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, a Sri Lankan Muslim Sufi teacher. In 1971, he founded a Sufi group in Philadelphia that catered to a racially integrated and ethnically diverse fellowship centered on his teachings about spirituality and its importance to peace and justice in the modern world. Muhaiyaddeen, who died in 1986, said that the Qur'an was the light of God in the world, and in "The Inner Qur'an," an essay published posthumously in 1987, he explained how this light would bring peace, both internal and external, to all those who sought to achieve a more intimate relationship with God.*



I seek refuge in Allah from the evils of the accursed Satan.

In the name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate. May all the peace, the beneficence, and the blessings of God be upon you.

Brothers and sisters in Islam, no matter what changes occur throughout the ages, the Qur'an is one thing that never changes. It is immutable. It offers an explanation appropriate for every period of time and for every level of understanding. All the meanings it contains could not be written down even if all the oceans of the world were made into ink and all the trees were made into pens.

To comprehend the Qur'an, first we must establish our absolute faith, certitude, and determination; then we must acquire wisdom; and



finally we must delve deep inside and study it from within. If we look into the depths of the Qur'an, we will find the complete never-ending wealth and grace of Almighty God. We will find the light of Allah, the resplendence of Allah. We will not find racial or religious prejudices, battles, or fighting of any kind. We will find only the benevolence of all the universes.

The Qur'an appeared as the beginning, the emergence of creation . . . , as the eternal life, the emergence of the soul . . . , as the food, the nourishment for all creations . . . , as the innermost heart . . . , as the beauty of the face which is a reflection of the beauty of the heart . . . , and as the plenitude, the light which became completeness within Allah and then emerged. . . .

The Sufis also say that only when man comes to a realization of himself and dives deep within the inner Qur'an, drinking from its essence, will the truth of Muhammad be revealed to him in his meditation. Only when he reaches the state where he speaks to Allah alone, can he be said to truly exist in Islam. When he attains that state of communion with Allah, he will understand that the Qur'an and the holy books are his body, the inner mystical form of a human being. Such a man will understand the inner meaning of *al-hamdu lilla*, which is the praise of the inner form of man. Understanding the history of the One who is all praise, he will glorify Him alone. Only then can he see this history as one continuous study, an endless ocean of divine knowledge. Otherwise each book he reads will then refer him to yet another book. As long as he continues reading only those outer books, he will never reach his freedom.

My brothers, we must consider how the Qur'an came from Allah, and we must delve deep within it. In order to understand its true meaning, we must be in the same state as that original Qur'an was when it emerged from Allah. It came as a resplendence, a radiance, resonance, and a grace. Then it came as a light to Gabriel. And when it came to Muhammad, the Messenger, it came as the grace and attributes of Allah. Next Muhammad brought it to us as a revelation. Then the sound of these revelations was transformed into letters and formed into words. What was revealed in those words ultimately became public knowledge and part of history. The interpretations of this knowledge later gave rise to religious differences,

divisions, and bigotry, which in turn gave rise to prejudice, fighting, and wars. This is the state the world has come to.

We, however, must delve into the depths of the Qur'an; we must experience each step of the way as it originally came from Allah. As we look deeper and deeper, we will see the Messenger of God, and once we see him, we will know how Gabriel came to him and how he received that grace. We will see the light, and if we look through that light we will experience the resonance of Allah within the Qur'an. As we understand that resonance, we will understand our life and our death; we will understand the Day of Judgment, the Day of Questioning, and the ninety-nine attributes of Allah.

Once we have this understanding, we will see that all men are our brothers just as the Qur'an teaches us. To truly see all people as our brothers is Islam. If we see anyone who is in need, we must offer him the water of the mercy of all the universes, the water of absolute faith, and the affirmation of that faith, the *kalima* [there is no god but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God]. That water must be given to everyone who is hungry or thirsty. We must embrace them lovingly, quench their thirst, and wash away their dirt. We must offer them love, compassion, patience, and tolerance, just as the Prophet did. This is what will satisfy their needs and dispel the darkness in their hearts.

My brothers and sisters in Islam, if we offer peace, then justice will flourish. Love will cut away all enmity. Compassion will cause God's grace to grow in this world, and then the food of faith and the mercy of all the universes can be offered. When that food is given, hunger, disease, old age, and death will be eliminated, and everyone will have peace.

Allah and the state of a true human being are right here within us. It is a great secret, hidden within our hearts. . . . Only if we can study this divine knowledge can we attain our freedom. All who have faith must reflect upon this, understand it, and teach it to those who have less wisdom, to those who have no clarity of heart, to those whose minds oppose us, and to those who have no peace of mind. We must teach them these qualities, give them this food, this beauty, and this nourishment of grace and absolute faith. Every human being in the community of Islam, everyone who has faith,

all those who are learned and wise, all the leaders of prayer and the teachers, all those who know the Qur'an—all must understand this. This is what I ask of you.

Amen. Allah is sufficient unto us all.



Source: M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, "The Inner Qur'an." In *Islam and World Peace*, 133–138. Philadelphia: Fellowship Press, 1987.

### **Qureshey, Safi (1951– )** *entrepreneur, philanthropist*

Safi Qureshey was the cofounder of the computer company AST, which developed from a small firm to a Fortune 500 company, one of the 500 largest companies in the world. As a philanthropist, he mentored young entrepreneurs, supported brain research, and promoted understanding of Islam in the United States.

Qureshey was born on February 15, 1951, in Karachi, Pakistan, where he completed an undergraduate degree in physics in 1971. After moving to the United States, he earned a B.S. in electrical engineering at the University of Texas in 1975. In 1980, Qureshey and fellow entrepreneurs Albert Wong and Thomas Yuen founded AST Research, a personal computer manufacturer in Irvine, California. Under Qureshey's leadership, AST grew from a small start-up to a Fortune 500 company. AST's first business opportunity arose from the mutual incompatibility of the two most popular personal computers of the 1980s: IBM's PC and Apple's Macintosh. AST manufactured microcomputer expansion cards that allowed Macintosh computers to run Microsoft's MS-DOS along with its own operating system. AST also manufactured expansion cards to provide IBM PCs with additional features such as a mouse port or a parallel printer port. In the late 1980s, as IBM PCs integrated these features into their motherboards, AST began to manufacture their own line of personal computers for the desktop, mobile, and server markets.

In 1987, in an attempt to maintain dominance in the computer market, IBM developed and patented MicroChannel Architecture, a propriety operating system. IBM also imposed strict licensing and royalty policies. Companies such as AST, which produced IBM clones at a lower price, needed an alternative system. In 1988, Qureshey banded together with eight other manufacturers of PC clones to create the "Gang of Nine," a group that created the Extended Industry Standard Architecture (EISA) to compete with IBM's proprietary MicroChannel Architecture. Essentially, the EISA

promised to perform the same tasks as MicroChannel at less expense. Even so, EISA was expensive to implement. It did not penetrate the desktop personal computer market, though it gained some success in the server market.

At the height of Qureshey's success in 1991, AST had operations in more than 100 countries and generated \$2.5 billion in annual revenue. But in the coming years, AST's sales declined. Rather than outsource the production of certain components, as other companies did, AST continued to develop its own components in order to maintain control over quality. In 1994, in a cost-cutting measure, Qureshey had to lay off 440 workers, and in 1996, he sold AST research to Samsung. A new company named AST Computers acquired rights to AST's name and intellectual property in 1999.

In 2006, Qureshey launched a new venture called Quartics, a wireless company that, like AST, found opportunity in the gap between two technologies—in this case, wireless personal computers and television. Quartics has produced microchips to allow consumers to broadcast media content from their personal computers to their televisions or other outlets of their choice. In 2008, Quartics reported \$5.6 million in sales and employed 58 people. In 2008, Qureshey resigned as chief executive officer of Quartics and focused on PHILANTHROPY work in the Chief Executive Officer Emeritus Club in Orange County, California, an organization that mentored promising young entrepreneurs.

Qureshey's activities have also extended to politics and international trade. From 1995 to 1999, Qureshey served as one of President Bill Clinton's appointees to the President's Export Council, a private advisory group seeking to increase American exports. Qureshey accompanied the secretary of the treasury on trips abroad, especially to Asia. In 2003, California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger enlisted Qureshey to recruit talented people of all ethnicities for the governor's new administration. Qureshey also served as regent's professor at the Graduate School of Business Management, University of California, Irvine (UCI), which awarded him the UCI Medal in 1995. In 1997, a research laboratory at UCI's Center for Neurobiology of Learning and Memory was named in his honor.

Like several other high-profile SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS who arrived in the United States after the liberalization of immigration laws in 1965, Qureshey has been hailed by other Muslim Americans as an example of how Muslims have contributed to the building of the American economy. He became one of Southern California's leading Muslim philanthropists, donating more than \$1 million to support brain research at UCI and additional seed money for a foundation to make documentaries promoting public understanding of Islam. His success has been put forward as an example for other Muslim Americans to follow. Qureshey not only helped

to build a Fortune 500 company, he also attempted to share his wealth and expertise with others.

*Sonja Spear with Nicholas P. Jackson*

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## radio

Muslim-American involvement in radio broadcasting reflects the diverse backgrounds and concerns of Muslim-American communities. From the 1960s until the beginning of the 21st century, radio developed as an important tool for Muslim community-building in the United States. Generally speaking, Muslims have not used radio as much as other American religious communities have, partially because of a lack of financial and human resources. Nevertheless, the use of new technologies, such as the INTERNET, has meant an increase in Muslim-American radio broadcasting.

In the 21st century, radio has become an increasingly important medium among Muslim Americans. The purpose of Muslim-American religious broadcasting, like that of other religious communities' radio broadcasts, has ranged from religious education and missionary work to bridge-building with other American populations. Whatever the purpose of these transmissions, Muslim involvement in radio broadcasting has shown the different ways in which Muslims shape and convey their community interests and, in turn, how this medium shapes and informs the ever-changing Muslim-American community.

### TWENTIETH-CENTURY MUSLIM-AMERICAN RADIO

Among the earliest Islamic communities to utilize radio technology was the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), which began broadcasting radio programs in the early 1960s. Prior to using the radio for the propagation of the NOI's teachings, ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975), the movement's longtime leader, reached out to the public via the use of pamphlets and newspapers. However, during the 1960s, Muhammad launched the NOI's first radio shows on CHICAGO airwaves, broadcasting the NOI's teachings and recipes for black uplift.

While Muhammad hosted weekly shows in Chicago, MALCOLM X (1925–65) broadcast from NEW YORK CITY and other American cities. From approximately 1965 to 1975, LOUIS FARRAKHAN (1933– ) acted as the voice of the Nation of Islam on the radio. Following this period, W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), son of Elijah and CLARA

MUHAMMAD (1899–1972), assumed leadership of the community and of the NOI's radio broadcasts. According to the NOI newspaper, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, more than 100 major American cities eventually broadcast the NOI's radio programming, with each local station determining the timing of the transmission.

After his father's death in 1975, W. D. Mohammed introduced various reforms to the NOI, bringing it closer to Sunni Islam and distancing it from the group's race-based theology and black separatism. When Elijah's son changed his name to Warith Deen Muhammad and renamed the Nation of Islam as the WORLD COMMUNITY OF AL-ISLAM IN THE WEST in 1976, the tradition of broadcasting the movement's teachings continued. From 2000 to 2003 and 2007 to 2008, *New Africa Radio*, an Internet radio station, developed an archive of Mohammed's radio broadcasts. These broadcasts were part of Mohammed's "Mosque Cares" project, part of a missionary effort to "invite" people to better understand Islam.

During the late 20th century, first-generation Muslim American immigrants also became more involved with the medium of radio. The IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 eased previous immigration restrictions in the United States, which resulted in an influx of more than a million Muslim immigrants from various Muslim countries, such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Turkey, Iran, Egypt, and Iraq, in the late 20th century. As the influence of these new Muslim Americans was increasingly felt in the American society, several important radio programs developed amid growing feelings that Muslim Americans were being denied the right to speak on their own behalf. Muslim-American radio represented an opportunity for Muslim Americans to define their own concerns and share them with each other and the broader American public.

One program that sought to fill this need was Radio Tahrir, the project of producer and host Barbara Nimri Aziz, which began broadcasting over Pacifica-WBAI in New York City in 1980. Tahrir, which literally means "liberation," is dedicated to bringing the voices, histories, and concerns of Arab and Muslim communities in the United States into the sphere of public broadcasting. Continuous and weekly hour-



long broadcasts began in 1989. Topics of interest included the arts and public affairs, civil rights, and social and legal issues, and Tahrir featured the voices of Muslim-American educators, musicians, leaders, thinkers, writers, and artists.

In the 1990s, Abdul Malik Mujahid, activist, scholar, and creator of the Sound Vision Foundation, launched Radio Islam as an online radio station. Later, the Chicago radio station, WCEV, began broadcasting the show for an hour once a week, with the aim of clarifying misunderstandings about Islam.

#### MUSLIM-AMERICAN RADIO SINCE 9/11

The al-Qaeda attacks on SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, raised a number of concerns that Muslim-American radio attempted to address on air. One of the first media campaigns undertaken by an Islamic organization after September 11 was developed by the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR). CAIR initiated a campaign of radio public-service announcements condemning terrorism as part of their "Not in the Name of Islam" campaign. Many secular radio talk shows invited Muslim speakers to participate in their programming, answering questions that arose in the political climate of the time and clarifying common misconceptions about the religious tradition.

Weekly radio programs on the topic of Islam in America included True Talk, a weekly hour-long live public affairs show on Tampa's WMNF 88.5 FM that focused on Muslim Americans and the broader global Muslim community. WMNF's mission involves entertaining and educating the public around a set of "shared values." The "Crescent Report," another Muslim-American program, was begun by Imam Mahdi Bray and broadcast weekly over WUST 1120 AM in Washington, D.C. Its first guest was America's first Muslim congressman, KEITH M. ELLISON (1963– ), elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2006. Topics of interest on the show have included religious and political issues such as Muslim-American civil rights.

Another radio program launched in the early 21st century was "Prophetic Echoes," a Harlem-based radio show hosted by Imam Al-Hajj Talib Abdul Rashid, the leader of the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood in Harlem, which has aired every fourth Friday of the month on 90.3 FM in New York City, or via Internet stream. Another was "The Beauty of Islam," a program on KCAA Radio 1050 AM in Loma Linda, California, hosted by Imam J. D. Hall, which attempted to counter distorted perceptions of Islam in American society.

Muslim Americans have also broadcast programs regarding interfaith activities. For example, "Interfaith Voices," a program carried on 60 stations in the United States and Canada, began in 2006. In order to promote interfaith dialogue, the program has addressed issues such as social justice, war and peace, POLITICS, human rights, and sexuality. It attempts to engage a

wider, non-Muslim public by discussing these issues from the viewpoint of different religious traditions.

While most Muslim-American radio broadcasts have been made available online as downloadable podcasts after their initial broadcast over the air, other shows have been created expressly for the Internet. For example, Radio al-Islam, founded in 1995, has provided live streams of QUR'AN recitations, recordings of the *ADHAN*, or call to PRAYER, discussions of Qur'anic interpretation, and traditional a cappella religious songs called *ansasheed*, as well as discussion on the Sunna, or the traditions of the prophet Muhammad, and Islamic POETRY.

The "American Muslim Radio Show" was created in 2008 and hosted by BlogTalkRadio, a Web site that allows anyone to set up a podcast or radio show over the Web. Led by Robert Salaam and Alia Sajid, the program has focused on the everyday lives of Muslim Americans. This technology has given Muslim Americans a relatively cheap and convenient method for developing community-based radio programming.

Muslim involvement in radio broadcasting reflects the diversity of Muslim-American communities and their concerns. In its short history, it has also highlighted the multiple functions of radio in the era of Web-based broadcasting. Radio offers Muslim Americans a forum for community-building and outreach, for educating one another and non-Muslims, and for conducting missionary work while also broaching issues that have little to do with religion.

Sajida Jalalzai

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#### Rahman, Fazlur (1919–1988) *intellectual*

Known for rigorous academic knowledge in both Islamic and Western classical philosophy, Fazlur Rahman was a highly regarded thinker among both Muslim and non-Muslim academics.

He was born on September 21, 1919, in the Punjab region of India, son of Maulana Shihab al-Din, a well-known Islamic scholar who had studied SHARI'AH, or Islamic law and ethics, at the Deoband seminary. After receiving his baccalaureate in Arabic at Punjab University, Rahman studied in England under S. Van den Bergh and H. A. R. Gibb at Oxford

University, earning his doctorate in 1949. His doctoral dissertation, which explored the philosophy of medieval Islamic philosopher Ibn Sina, was published in 1952 as *Avicenna's Psychology*. During the 1950s, he taught at the University of Durham in England and McGill University in Montreal, Canada. At McGill, Rahman staffed the faculty of its Institute of Islamic Studies and published one of his most important works, *Prophecy in Islam: Philosophy and Orthodoxy* (1958). This book, which referenced texts in Arabic, Persian, Greek, Latin, German, and French, showcased his command of both Western and Islamic philosophical sources and languages.

In 1961, Rahman became the head of the new Central Institute of Islamic Research in Karachi, Pakistan, where he founded the academic journal *Islamic Studies* and advised the government on Islamic affairs. After the 1964 elections, Pakistani president Ayyub Khan asked him to be a religious affairs adviser, but Khan began to lose control of the country in the 1960s, as Bangladesh threatened to secede from Pakistan. By 1968, Rahman's political alliances and unorthodox interpretations of religious tradition put him at risk, and he received various threats against his life. That year, he took a temporary teaching post to teach at the University of California, Los Angeles, and then, in 1969, was appointed Professor of Islamic Thought at the University of Chicago, where he stayed until his death in 1988. He was the first Muslim to be appointed to the faculty of the University of Chicago Divinity School.

Rahman excelled in both purely academic scholarship and interpretive debate with fellow Muslims about how best to understand Islam in a modern context. In the latter capacity, he is best known for his efforts to revive and maintain the liveliness of Islamic intellectual life by attempting to separate the core of Islamic tradition from the corpus of medieval Islamic interpretations. To understand and make the best use of the QUR'AN, Rahman argued, Muslims should understand the historical contexts in which the revelations came to the prophet MUHAMMAD in the seventh century. Once this interpretation was accomplished, he explained, the modern Muslim could see the larger principles at work and apply the larger moral and ethical principles in a dynamic way to contemporary problems.

Active in both the academic and Muslim communities, Rahman worked to bridge the two worlds. Since his death on July 26, 1988, Rahman's efforts have continued to wield influence over the field of Islamic studies and ISLAMIC THOUGHT, as can be observed in the work of feminist thinkers such as AMINA WADUD.

Hanifa Abdul Sabur

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**Ramadan** See HOLIDAYS; ISLAMIC CALENDAR.

## religious life

Throughout their history in the United States, most religiously observant Muslims have structured their lives around a relationship to God and allegiance to the human example of the prophet MUHAMMAD (ca. 570–632), as expressed in the declaration, "There is no god but God. Muhammad is the messenger of God." Most have strived to follow the QUR'AN, which they believe Muhammad received from God through the angel Gabriel, as well as the example of Muhammad himself. Amid this striving, religious practices have been similar both within and between various Muslim groups in the United States, but they have also contained striking differences. The main Muslim groups in the United States are Sunnis, Shi'as, Sufis, and the Nation of Islam.

### RELIGIOUS LIFE IN SUNNI ISLAM

The first Muslims to come to the Americas in any significant number arrived as slaves from West Africa in the 17th century. Approximately 10 percent of all West African slaves in America, these Sunnis generally adhered to fundamental Islamic practices including fasting and prayer. This early Sunni presence faded away, however, largely because many slave masters prohibited the practice of Islam and forced their slaves to convert to Christianity. Sunni Islam reappeared in the United States in the late 19th century through Arab and other immigrants.

In the first half of the 20th century, significant Sunni communities emerged. Many immigrants established Islamic centers or mosques in or near large cities such as NEW YORK CITY, DETROIT, and CHICAGO, and in smaller cities or towns including CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA. Also in the first half of the 20th century, Muslim communities composed mostly of African Americans began to form. African Americans began to convert to various Sunni Islamic movements and mosques in the late 1920s and 1930s.

The number of Sunni immigrants increased greatly after the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965. Many of these immigrants held jobs in medicine, engineering, and other sciences, and they established hundreds of mosques and ISLAMIC SCHOOLS. Since 1965, immigrants have made up the majority of Sunni Muslims in the United States, yet American-born Sunnis, mostly African-American, have also been a very sizable and influential component of American Sunni Islam.

Certain practices have defined the lives of religiously observant Sunnis in the United States. *Salat*, a very structured form of prayer, requires specific bodily postures including kneeling and placing one's forehead on the ground, symbolizing submission before God. Sunni Muslims perform *salat* five times daily, facing the direction of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Before praying, they purify themselves by washing their face and arms, a process that Muslims also undertake before handling the Qur'an. A weekly highlight is the noontime Friday *salat*, which includes a sermon.

Sunni religious life has also included fasting during the month of Ramadan, when Muslims refrain from food and drink from dawn until dusk. Upon sundown, Muslims often gather together for a fast-breaking meal, which may include reading a large portion of the Qur'an. Despite the challenges of fasting, many Muslims look forward to Ramadan and feel sad when it ends due to benefits they receive, such as growing closer to God, developing greater patience and discipline, and deepening their understanding of the poor and needy. Because Muslims follow a lunar calendar, Ramadan occurs during different seasons of the year.

The *HAJJ*, or pilgrimage to Mecca, has been another defining religious practice for American Sunnis. Muslims must make this pilgrimage once in their lifetime if physically and financially able. A powerful expression of Muslim unity, the hajj involves a series of rituals performed by approximately 2 million pilgrims during a five-day period. Among these rituals are walking around the Ka'ba, a black cubical structure believed by Muslims to have been built long before the time of Muhammad by Abraham and his son Ishmael, and throwing stones at a pillar to symbolize stoning the devil.

Although these defining practices have given American Sunni religious life a significant degree of similarity, important differences have emerged among American Sunni Muslims. Whereas some Sunni mosques in the United States have had full-time, trained leaders, others have not. Often this has been true in less wealthy, largely African-American communities, yet it has also occurred in more wealthy mosques, where Friday worshippers may listen to a sermon from a doctor who wants to understand his religion but lacks classical training in Islamic history and law.

Another significant issue of difference for American Sunnis has concerned *WOMEN* and *salat*. In many mosques



As part of the *salat* ritual, Muslims line up next to one another and bow in the direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca, which is also the site of the annual hajj, or pilgrimage. (Bob Daemmrich/PhotoEdit)



women pray behind or to the side of men, while in others they pray in a separate room, perhaps on a different floor. Sunnis have also differed regarding female leadership of *salat*. Opposing the regulation that women may not lead *salat* if at least one man is present, religious scholar AMINA WADUD led a mixed-gender *salat* in New York in 2005. This controversial event took place in a Christian cathedral after three mosques refused to serve as host. Additionally, the matter of women's DRESS has been a point of difference among Sunnis in the United States. Most have agreed that the Qur'an requires a woman to cover her body modestly not only at the mosque but in any setting in which she may be seen by a man who is not a close family member. The issue of which body parts must be covered has caused debate, with some mandating covering the face and others saying that the combination of a headscarf and modest dress is sufficient. Still others have disagreed with the need for any head covering at all, arguing that this is a cultural, unnecessary addition to Islamic devotion.

#### RELIGIOUS LIFE IN SHI'A ISLAM

Shi'a Muslims were among the immigrants who came to the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The first Shi'a immigrants arrived from Lebanon, and others came later from India, Iran, and Iraq. Similar to early Sunni immigrants, these Shi'as were generally economically and educationally disadvantaged, a trend that changed in the second half of the 20th century. From 1952 to 1979, a large number of Shi'as came to the United States as students from Iran during the rule of the Shah. Many returned to the United States after the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. While Shi'as who live in smaller cities and towns have often participated in Sunni mosques, many have gathered in or near large cities in the United States and have established mosques of their own.

One important Shi'a center in the United States has been Dearborn, Michigan. Lebanese Shi'as gathered in Dearborn and constructed a mosque in 1940. At risk of losing their distinctiveness from the larger surrounding Sunni community, Shi'as in Dearborn grew in awareness of their uniqueness with the arrival of trained Shi'a leaders who taught them about their own history, beliefs, and practices. This awareness developed further with the arrival of thousands of Shi'as during the Lebanese Civil War (1975–90).

As a result of this activity over the decades, Shi'as in Dearborn have been rather diverse in their religious practice and interpretation of Islamic law. Stricter mosques have required women to wear head scarves inside the mosque and outside of the home. Other Dearborn Shi'as have identified this as unnecessary and possibly harmful to attracting new followers. The Islamic Center of America, a Shi'a mosque in Dearborn, claims to be the largest mosque in the United

States. Sunday sermons at this mosque have been a distinct departure from Islamic tradition. Sunday attendees have outnumbered those on Fridays, primarily because women and children attend sermon services only on Sundays.

To a large extent, the American Shi'a practice of *salat*, fasting during Ramadan, and the hajj pilgrimage has been similar to American Sunni practice of these rituals. Differences include the times during which *salat* prayer occurs during the day and patterns of financial giving. Both Sunnis and Shi'as have commonly required payment of *zakat*, a fixed portion of a Muslim's wealth given to assist the poor and needy and to enable the spread of Islam. In addition to *zakat*, many Shi'as have also paid *khums*, a 20 percent tax given by Shi'as in the United States to pay salaries of religious teachers and leaders and to help with the building of mosques. An even more visible difference between Shi'as and Sunnis has been the Shi'a emphasis upon Ashura. On this day of mourning, commemorated on the 10th day of the month of Muharram on the ISLAMIC CALENDAR, Shi'as remember the death of Husayn, Muhammad's grandson, who was killed in 680 by the leader of the Islamic empire. Mourning occurs at special ceremonies in mosques and in processions that include rhythmic beating of the chest.

#### RELIGIOUS LIFE IN SUFI ISLAM

One of the earliest teachers of Sufi doctrine in the United States, INAYAT KHAN traveled across the nation in the 1910s and 1920s after studying with both Muslim and Hindu masters. Khan founded the SUFI ORDER OF THE WEST, a group that many Muslims have criticized. Criticism from other Muslims has been a common trend throughout SUFISM's history. Among other claims, many Muslims have declared that Sufis overstep the bounds of true Islam through their practice of *DHIKR*, a ritual practice often involving music or repetitive chanting to promote remembrance of God. Like many Sufi masters throughout history, Khan proclaimed the virtues of music. He taught that music puts one in harmony with life and allows one to appreciate every aspect of beauty. Many American Sunnis have taken exception to Khan's view of music, claiming that the Qur'an and the tradition of Muhammad prohibit Muslims from listening to instrumental music because it distracts Muslims from awareness of God. As demonstrated by contemporary Sunni HIP-HOP groups such as NATIVE DEEN, however, not all Sunni Muslims have shared this position.

In addition to simply performing music, some Sufi groups in the United States have featured dance as an important part of their practice of *dhikr*. The MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER, tracing their roots back to 13th-century Turkey, came to the United States by way of Suleiman Hayati Dede. This Sufi group has been commonly known as the "whirling dervishes" due to its unique form of dance, in which dancers silently chant the



name of God and whirl around a center point, considered to be God, the spiritual center of the universe.

Another important connection between dance and Sufism in the United States has been Dances of Universal Peace, begun by SAMUEL LEWIS, or “Sufi Sam,” in the late 1960s. Shaped by Inayat Khan as well as by other forms of religious expression such as Zen Buddhism, Lewis promoted spiritual meditative dances, involving a number of dancers in a circle and featuring some sort of sacred chant. According to Lewis, these dances manifest the truth that lies at the core of all religions and promote peace as dancers experience this universal truth.

Having emphasized Sufism’s uniqueness, it should also be pointed out that many Sufi mosques and organizations in the United States have shared numerous beliefs and practices with Muslims not influenced by Sufism. The Mosque of Sheikh M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen in PHILADELPHIA, founded upon the teaching of a Sri Lankan-born Sufi master who came to the United States in 1971, demonstrates Sufi belief and practice while following a Sunni interpretation of Islamic law. Like other mosques throughout the United States, this mosque is open for the five daily *salat* prayers; distinctively, though, it also offers early morning *dhikr* recitation. Furthermore, reflecting the common Sufi tendency to revere a group’s founder or great master of the past, pilgrims visit the resting place of Sheikh Muhaiyaddeen outside of Philadelphia. Other Sufi mosques and organizations are connected to Shi’a Islam. Dr. Javad Nurbakhsh, a psychiatrist from Iran, brought the NIMATULLAHI SUFI ORDER to the United States in the 1970s. This group, like many other Sufi organizations, has emphasized love and respect for all people regardless of religious belief or affiliation.

#### RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE NATION OF ISLAM

In 1930, W. D. FARD appeared in Detroit and claimed to have come from Mecca with a message specifically directed to African Americans, whom he identified as members of the lost ancient tribe of Shabazz. Elijah Poole, renamed ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, became the leader of Fard’s movement, the NATION OF ISLAM. This movement emphasized inward and outward cleanliness, good manners and respect, modest dress by women, and avoidance of pork, alcohol, and smoking. While incorporating some elements of Sunni Islamic tradition, the Nation of Islam also featured elements that distinguished it sharply from mainstream Islam. Whereas many Muslims have taught the equality of all races, the Nation of Islam responded to racial discrimination against blacks by prohibiting whites from becoming members. Furthermore, contrary to the strong concern especially among Sunni Muslims not to make anyone or anything equal to God, the Nation of Islam declared that W. D. Fard held divine status.

After attracting many followers in the middle of the century, the Nation of Islam greatly felt the effects of the conversion of MALCOLM X, one of its most prominent leaders, to Sunni Islam in 1964. While performing the hajj, Malcolm X came to see Islam as a religion of racial unity and equality and no longer accepted the Nation of Islam’s teachings of black superiority as the basis of his religious life. A decade later, Nation of Islam leader W. D. MOHAMMED, the son of Elijah Muhammad, redirected the organization toward a path of Sunni belief and practice. Opposing this, LOUIS FARRAKHAN then revived the original Nation of Islam, which continued to emphasize the teachings of Elijah Muhammad. Farrakhan cut off all ties with W. D. Mohammed’s community in 1978, discouraged integration with whites, and taught that blacks should control their own resources, although he officially reconciled with Mohammed in 1999.

Consideration of *salat* and fasting can provide some insight into the complex relationship between the Nation of Islam and other forms of Islam in the United States. In the late 1950s, Elijah Muhammad taught his followers to perform *salat* in a traditionally Islamic manner, with the exception that they utter words in English rather than the traditional Arabic. In later comments on *salat*, however, he added more nontraditional elements and also broke radically from tradition by claiming that the required elements of *salat*, known as *fard* in Arabic, refer to W. D. Fard. As for fasting, Elijah Muhammad instructed his followers to practice the dawn-to-dusk fast during the Christian Advent season instead of the month of Ramadan, arguing that followers would benefit from having a cause for celebration in December as a substitute to Christmas. W. D. Mohammed changed this policy, calling upon black Muslims to observe the fast during Ramadan in unity with Muslims worldwide. Despite his many disagreements with W. D. Mohammed, Louis Farrakhan agreed, and later promoted fasting during Ramadan and Friday congregational prayers along the lines of Sunni Islam.

While striking differences between the Nation of Islam and other Muslim groups have caused some to question if the Nation of Islam can really be called true Islam, others have maintained that the differences illustrate the rich variety of Muslim groups in the United States. Certainly many characteristics of religious life have been similar throughout Muslim communities in the United States. Ultimately, these communities also reflect the varied population and history of the United States itself.

Steven Fink

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## revivalism

Religious revivalism is a phenomenon in which people of faith call one another and others to renew and revive their religious traditions. Religious revivals have been a part of American history since the First Great Awakening in the 18th century, which occurred in the decades before the American Revolution. Though it is difficult to determine when each revival begins and ends, many scholars agree that the 1970s mark one such period of religious revival in the United States. Many Muslims, Christians, Jews, advocates of countercultural spiritual movements, and others called on fellow Americans to renew their ties with a religion or a spiritual practice that they generally believed would improve American society. Clearly affected by these larger American trends, Muslim Americans shared in this revival. But as part of a global Muslim community, they were also influenced by calls for reform and renewal, or *islah wa tajdid*, in Muslim-majority nations. Muslim-American revivalism brought together strands of this global Islamic revival with those of the American religious revival in the late 20th century.

## ISLAMIC REVIVAL COMES TO AMERICA

As with many religious traditions, the history of Islam is replete with calls for reform and renewal of religious faith. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as Europeans came to militarily occupy most Muslim-majority countries, Muslim leaders said that such powerlessness was a sign of moral decline and, like earlier religious leaders, called for a religious revival. In Egypt, one of the most effective voices for Islamic reform was the Muslim Brotherhood, which was founded by Hasan al-Banna, a schoolteacher, in 1928. The organization first focused on popular morality and providing social services to the less fortunate, and then became active in Egyptian politics. From the 1940s through the 1960s, members were frequently imprisoned, and sometimes killed, for their various criticism of the Egyptian government.

The Brotherhood advocated an Islamist government in which Islamic ideas would form the foundation of government policies. The state's legal system, it said, should be based on the SHARI'AH, or Islamic LAW and ethics. The Muslim Brotherhood also saw the potential of Islamic reform and renewal to reach beyond national borders, and sought allies for its approach across the Islamic world. After Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser consolidated his control over the country by suppressing the organization in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Muslim Brotherhood turned to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, an enemy of Egyptian expansion throughout the Middle East, for financial support and political refuge. Gaining Saudi support meant that the Muslim Brotherhood could broadcast their message to a much larger world audience.

The Muslim Brotherhood came to the United States during the 1950s and 1960s by way of immigrant students, visitors, and refugees who had been influenced by its ideas. These Muslims, often alienated at first by American culture and sometimes from second- and third-generation ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, rejected the differing religious culture of some Muslim-American organizations. As these immigrants established their own mosques and associations, they also began to influence indigenous Muslims. Cities such as PHILADELPHIA and NEW YORK CITY became places of interaction among Arab immigrants and indigenous African-American converts.

For example, Talib Dawud, a Caribbean immigrant, came originally to the United States to play JAZZ in the 1940s. He was among several African-American jazz musicians who converted to Islam. When Dawud lived in Philadelphia in the late 1950s, he met Mahmoud Alwan, an advocate for the Muslim Brotherhood's views. Eventually Dawud encouraged a group of followers who had gathered around him to join the International Muslim Brotherhood in Harlem, New York, and advocated a closer relationship between Muslim Americans and Muslims abroad. His efforts to expand the

movement conflicted with other Muslim-American movements such as the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI). Dawud criticized the theology of the NOI and stressed the need for Muslim unity across racial and national lines.

Another Caribbean immigrant influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood was Sheikh Daoud Ahmad Faisal, who gave voice to Islamist ideas in the United States in the 1950s. Faisal founded the Islamic Mission to America, which became one of the most prominent mosques in New York City. This mosque was a gathering place for both Arab immigrants and indigenous African-American converts in the area, and Faisal consciously attempted to bring these two communities together. Faisal envisioned the renewal of a global Islamic civilization and he worked to strengthen international ties. In calling for an Islamic awakening, he traveled around the United States and preached to African Americans who had grown up as Christians. Faisal also espoused anticommunist rhetoric during the 1960s and stressed a political quietism in which he urged followers to obey the government and cooperate with police.

The Islamist message of the Muslim Brotherhood found resonance among AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS who were interested in the global revival of Islam during the latter half of the 20th century. The 1960s was a politically tumultuous time for Muslims in other parts of the world. The Muslim Brotherhood USA viewed Algeria's war for independence against France, to name one example, as evidence of a global Islamic revival. Sayyid Qutb, who had become the major ideological figure of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, was arrested several times for antigovernment political organizing and was eventually executed during this period. The involvement of Islamist ideas in other revolutionary political contexts reinforced a sense of solidarity among Muslims, both immigrant and indigenous, in the United States.

The Muslim Brotherhood also played a direct role in the development of student groups in the United States. The MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA) was born in 1963 out of the collaboration of various Muslim student groups, including the Egyptian Brotherhood, on the campus of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Muslim student immigrants from the Middle East were often well educated and were sometimes harshly critical of their home countries and Western culture. Supported in part by aid from Saudi Arabia, the MSA created an extensive networking system, in which every major college campus hosted a chapter.

By the 1970s, however, the MSA began to sever its ties to the Islamist group as the organization began to focus more on helping and working with students who planned to stay in the United States. The Islamic revival broadened its base both in the United States and abroad. More and more Muslims were participating in its various activities. But as its appeal increased, the call for renewal and reform could

not be directed by any one organization or contained by any one single belief. The meaning of Islamic reform shifted depended on who was advocating it. In the United States, the Islamic revival took on a distinctively American flavor.

#### LATE TWENTIETH-CENTURY MUSLIM-AMERICAN AWAKENINGS

For many Muslim Americans in the late 20th century, a commitment to Islamic revival emphasized personal piety over any explicitly political agenda. For some, that meant regularly performing daily PRAYER, engaging in PHILANTHROPY, fasting more faithfully during Ramadan, or renewing their commitment to other aspects of Muslim RELIGIOUS LIFE. Some gave up interest-bearing savings accounts, trying to adhere to the Islamic prohibition against usury. Many men and women sought to DRESS more modestly, donning loose-fitting clothing and head cover of some kind. Muslim Americans sought to purchase FOOD that had been prepared according to Islamic DIETARY LAWS.

In response to the desire among Muslim Americans to lead a more religious life, a whole host of consumer products was introduced by Muslim and non-Muslim businesses. Midamar, founded in CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, in 1974 by a multigenerational Muslim-American family, offered HALAL, or permissible, food by mail order; eventually, pizza, chicken nuggets, and beef sausage became available. Muslim-American media, including books, newspapers, magazines, and radio, proliferated.

Sufi Muslim groups also fueled the revival, and an increasing number of Sunni religious practices, such as the reading and study of the QUR'AN and the performance of the daily prayer, were incorporated into the practices of such groups. For example, Sufi master M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, who founded a Sufi group in Philadelphia in 1971, took a gradual approach but by 1981 had introduced his followers, including many new converts, to the Qur'an and the pillars of Islamic religious practice, including the prescribed daily prayers.

Some Muslim Americans focused not only on inward renewal but also on outward reforms of U.S. society. Imam W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), African-American Muslim leader of the NOI and WORLD COMMUNITY OF AL-ISLAM IN THE WEST, joined Christian and Muslim leaders in blaming illegal drugs, extramarital sex, and other signs of what he considered to be moral decay for larger social problems. Religious renewal, many Americans in the 1970s said, was necessary in the face of what they considered to be negative social change in the late 1960s. Even some former hippies and radicals advocated what one scholar called “getting saved from the 60s.”

The socially conservative among Jewish, Christian, and Muslim revival advocates denounced what they believed was an absence of traditional family values such as sexual restraint and clean living. High inflation, the failure to pre-

vent the communist takeover of Vietnam, and legalized abortion were signs of how moral corruption led to societal decay, according to these critics. Personal responsibility, they said, had been replaced by ineffective government programs that addressed the economic and social problems that only individuals, families, and local communities could effectively solve. In LOS ANGELES in the early 1990s, for example, W. D. Mohammed appeared at a meeting with Roman Catholic Cardinal Roger Mahony and Jewish radio personality Dennis Praeger to discuss religious solutions to abortion, drugs, and homelessness.

In the midst of sometimes utopian dreams of a better world, some Muslim Americans literally called for the United States to become an Islamic state, but this was rare. Most Muslim Americans rejected this view, hoping to participate as full partners alongside Jews, Christians, and others in creating a tolerant, if strengthened nation. Even as some missionary organizations, such as the TABLIGHI JAMA'AT, wished to convert more Americans to the religion of Islam, they did not wish to become involved in electoral POLITICS.

Perhaps one of the most significant elements of the revival was its emphasis on individual Muslims studying and interpreting the Qur'an for themselves. For most of Islamic history, Muslims had memorized various passages of the Qur'an and recited them as part of their prayers and other religious rituals, but left its interpretation up to scholars who devoted their lives full time to its study. By the end of the 20th century, that had changed.

The Qur'an became something of a handbook for daily life, and Muslims at the grassroots would meet in each other's homes as well as in mosques and Islamic centers to discuss its meanings. In Los Angeles, for instance, anthropologist Carolyn Rouse met with many African-American Sunni women in the early 1990s whose informal study of the Qur'an circulated from house to house in South Central Los Angeles. Looking to the women of the seventh century for inspiration, these women debated the unfaithfulness of men, divorce, domestic violence, and the wearing of a *HIJAB*, or a head scarf. Women would use what they learned to influence their families and their religious leaders, often challenging patriarchy on the basis of their conclusion.

### CONCLUSION

In everyday American speech, religious revivalism has come to be associated with another, more often used term, funda-

mentalism. For the first half of the 20th century, fundamentalism was a strictly Christian term that referred to beliefs in the inerrancy of the Bible, the virgin birth of JESUS, and faith in Jesus Christ as the sole path to heavenly salvation. By the end of the 20th century, however, the meaning of the term fundamentalism had been broadened to include a far greater range of beliefs and behaviors, including socially conservative values, closed-mindedness, and even political violence.

Despite its popularity, the word *fundamentalism* does not capture the complex, interrelated phenomena that characterized the Islamic-American awakening of the late 20th century. While perhaps more than a million Muslim Americans publicly demonstrated a renewed commitment to Islam in the way they talked, dressed, and even ate, they did not agree on any single political platform or even any one version of the Islamic faith. But Muslims from different racial, ethnic, and national origins did contribute to the rich and sometimes contradictory expectations, ideas, and practices that gave new meaning to their identity as Muslims. Even as they argued about some of the basic tenets of their faith, these Muslims created a shared world inspired by the hope that Islam would improve their own lives and make the world a better place.

Edward E. Curtis IV and Shannon Dunn

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**Ross, North Dakota** See NORTH DAKOTA.





**Said, Nicholas (Mohammed Ali ben Said)**  
(ca. 1831–1882) *slave, traveler, Civil War soldier, teacher, author*

Born the son of a respected general in Bornou (near the modern-day borders of Libya, Chad, and Sudan) around 1831, Mohammed Ali ben Said (later renamed Nicholas Said) was enslaved as a young boy, served princes and diplomats, traveled on five continents, learned to speak seven languages, fought for the Union Army during the U.S. Civil War (1861–65), and authored the longest English AUTOBIOGRAPHY of any AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVE. After journeying across Africa, Europe, and the Middle East for a series of masters, Said crossed the Atlantic as a paid servant for a married couple from Dutch Guiana (now Suriname). However, the couple swindled him, leaving Said stranded and penniless in Canada. Undaunted, he went to work as a teacher and a soldier, living briefly in Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina before settling permanently in St. Stephens, Alabama.

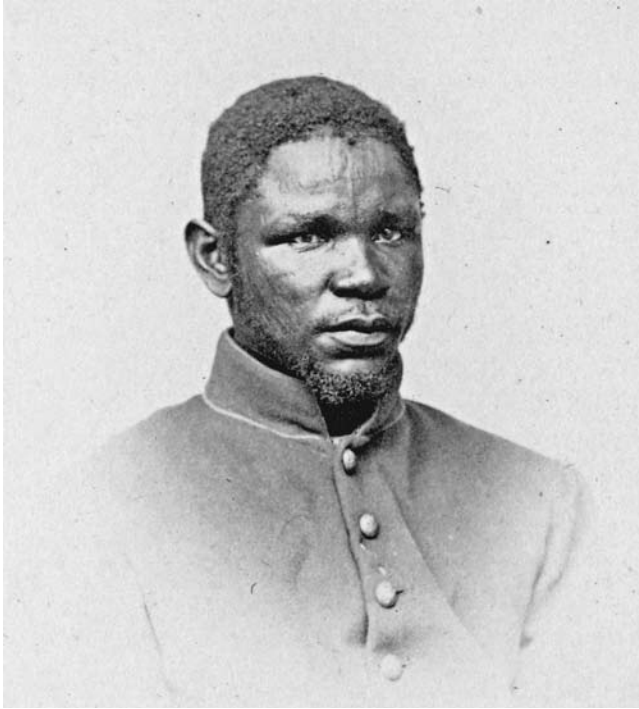
Despite his ARABIC name, Mohammed Ali ben Said was not raised as a Muslim. In his 1873 *Autobiography of Nicholas Said; a Native of Bournou, Eastern Soudan, Central Africa*, he described the religion of his native land as “fetish, without human sacrifices.” In fact, Said associated the introduction of Islam into Central Africa with desolation and ruin, because an invading army from Bagirmey had killed his father and three brothers when Said was 12 or 13 years old. The invasion, Said explained, resulted in the destruction of cities and the enslavement of thousands. Following this military defeat, Said went to live with Malam Katory, a stern but effective educator who taught him and other boys from elite families to write and speak Arabic. Approximately two years later, Said was captured and enslaved by a “marauding tribe” of Kindills (also known as Tuaregs), who transported him by horseback across the Sahara desert and sold him to an African Arab named Abd El-Kader. Said describes the torturous journey, during which he suffered from extreme heat and thirst, concluding that the “Sahara must be seen and felt to be realized.”

After learning that Said was the son of a general, Abd El-Kader treated him well and eventually honored his request to

be sold to Abdy-Aga, a young officer in the Ottoman Army. The Turkish officer was a kind master, as was his father, Hadji Daoud. Said accompanied Daoud on the old man’s fourth HAJJ, or pilgrimage to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Together they journeyed from Tripoli to Alexandria, to Cairo, to Khartoum, across Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) to port cities in modern-day Eritrea and Somalia, and finally to the Arabian Peninsula. Observing trains and railroads for the first time in Egypt, Said recalled that he “had seen so many wonderful and unexpected sights within the few previous years that I think my organ of marvellousness had gone to sleep from sheer surfeit and exhaustion.”

In his *Autobiography*, Said described Mecca as an attractive, brightly lit city with wide streets and three-story stone houses, though he noted that many of the city’s residents seemed indifferent to the pilgrims’ pious enthusiasm. Said also explained some rituals of the hajj, including the procession around the Ka’ba and the kissing of the “black stone.” Because he was a slave, Said wrote, “it was construed that I did not go there voluntarily, and consequently, I was debarred the felicity of saluting the petrified angel.” Said described Medina as “by far, the handsomest city I ever saw in the East,” and found Medina’s residents to be more serious and studious than those of Mecca. Said’s account of the hajj is emblematic of his paradoxical stance toward Islam in general: On one hand, he expressed interest in and attentiveness to Muslim teachings, while on the other hand, he criticized Muslims who did not adhere to those teachings. Even in his comment about being unable to salute the “petrified angel,” we can read both disappointment at being excluded from a sacred Muslim ritual and a measured cynicism in his description of the black stone. In reading this passage, however, we should also remember that Said’s intended reading public primarily consisted of non-Muslim, white Americans.

When Daoud and Said returned from the hajj, Daoud’s store had burned to the ground, rendering him bankrupt, and he was compelled to sell Said to Fuad Pacha, then Minister of the Interior for the Ottoman Empire. Said was taken to Constantinople, where the Pacha presented him as a gift to his brother-in-law, Reschid. “I began . . . to think that it was



In 1862, during the Civil War, Nicholas Said, a former African slave who traveled on five continents and completed the pilgrimage to Mecca, enlisted in the 55th Regiment of the Massachusetts Colored Volunteers. He later wrote an English-language autobiography about his remarkable life, including his experiences in the South during Reconstruction. (*Massachusetts Historical Society*)

my fate to pass from hand to hand, with never a sure and definite resting place,” Said recalled. His fears were again realized when a Russian diplomat, Prince Anatole Mentchikoff, convinced Reschid Pacha to transfer Said to his possession. In 1854, Mentchikoff brought Said to Odessa, a city on the Black Sea (now part of the Ukraine) and procured a tutor to teach Said Russian, which he later described as the most difficult language he ever learned. After finding the treatment by Mentchikoff’s other servants intolerable, Said entered the service of Prince Nicholas Vassilievitch Troubetzköy, a member of an eminent St. Petersburg family. One day as he was walking in the city, Said observed “a distinguished looking individual, in full Russian uniform, approaching.” When Said removed his fez and stood at attention like a soldier, the individual—who turned out to be Czar Nicholas I—clapped him on the shoulder and commented, “*Malodetz*,” which translates as “smart boy.”

Prince Troubetzköy proved to be a demanding master, requiring Said to learn French and to convert to Orthodox Christianity. Though he initially resisted “that vivacious tongue” and what he called “the Greek faith,” at length Said succumbed to both, and he was baptized as a Christian in

November 1855. This ceremony also marked his official name change from Mohammed Ali Ben Said to Nicholas Said. But after the baptism was over, when Said “thought the job was complete,” the priest required him to kneel on a rock-hard surface for hours, begging forgiveness for his past sins. Said recalled that he was “in perfect agony for the greater portion of the time, and became so enraged with the papa, that I fear I committed more sins during that space of time than I had done in days before. In fact . . . a few ungainly Mohammedan asperities of language bubbled up to my lips. But I managed to get through without any overt act of rebellion.” Said’s conversion to Orthodox Christianity is described as an act of violence and power, placing him “in perfect agony” and causing him to become “enraged.” Indeed, the Arabic phrases which “bubbled up” in this moment suggest that Said placed more stock in Muslim beliefs than his *Autobiography* elsewhere concedes. They also call the validity of this second conversion into question—for the lack of “any overt act of rebellion” suggests that Said opted for more covert forms of resistance.

Over the next several years, Said accompanied the prince as he toured Europe’s great cities, including Vienna, Dresden, Munich, Heidelberg, Rome, Paris, and London. Said’s travel notes regarding European politics, crime in Italian culture, comparative architectural styles, and potential successors to the papacy indicate the breadth and depth of his curiosity. In exchange for his services, Prince Troubetzköy granted Said permission to visit his native land in Africa for one year, granting him 300 pounds for the voyage. However, a colonial traveler prevailed upon Said to accompany him to the Americas, and as Said explained it, his fondness for travel won him over. Therefore, he set sail with De Sanddrost I. J. Rochussen of Dutch Guiana and his new wife, landing in the United States a few weeks later (probably in 1860). After sailing around the Caribbean, Said and the Rochussens traveled north to New York and proceeded into Canada. In a small town north of Ottawa, Rochussen asked Said for a loan, claiming that his “remittance” was behind schedule. Rochussen promptly disappeared with all 300 pounds, leaving Said penniless. A local pastor loaned him 10 dollars and advised him to seek help in Detroit or Buffalo, where he might find support from those cities’ sizable black communities.

In 1862, Said worked as a teacher in Detroit, and the following year he joined the 55th Regiment of Massachusetts Colored Volunteers—the sister unit to the 54th Regiment, the first black regiment recruited in the North during the Civil War. Little is known about Said’s military service, partly because he did not discuss it in his autobiography. After he was discharged in South Carolina in 1865, Said reportedly married, traveled around the South teaching and speaking, and finally settled in St. Stephens, Alabama. “I felt an insurmountable desire to put an end to my peregrinations,” he explained. Said’s

autobiography concludes with a tribute to the importance of education and self-denial and restates his desire to assist with the project of racial uplift in the United States.

Nicholas Said's life raises intriguing questions about how much control enslaved Africans and African Americans had over their own lives. By the act of writing his life, Said exerted a form of self-mastery over his past, even though he spent much of it in servitude of one form or another. His story also reveals the ways that religious practice and identity both challenged and supported the power of those who owned him: Said's religious conversions were simultaneously acts of submission to and resistance against the dominant culture in which he was living at the time. In his *Autobiography*, Said lamented that "Africa has been, through prejudice and ignorance, so sadly misrepresented, that anything like intelligence, industry, etc. is believed not to exist among its natives." His text and others like it work to rectify this misconception.

Patrick E. Horn

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### Autobiography of Nicholas Said (1873)

*After being captured as a teenager in his native West Africa, Mohammed Ali ben Said (ca. 1831–82) spent the next 20 years traveling through Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America. According to his own account, he arrived in the United States in 1867, though Said actually came to North America at least ten years earlier and served in the Union Army during the Civil War from 1863 to 1865. Said, who changed his first name to Nicholas and lived in the South after the war, likely expunged his service in the Union Army from his autobiography in order to protect himself from any retribution from white Southerners*

*unhappy with the outcome of the war. This excerpt from his autobiography picks up Said's journey in the United States during the Reconstruction era of U.S. history. Said explains how he went from the North to the South. Said's account of Reconstruction reveals how unsafe travel could be for black people, even with the Union Army still occupying the South. He praises black schoolchildren but criticized some of the black "carpetbaggers," Northern African Americans who had come South to pursue work in education, business, and politics.*



While in Sandusky City [Ohio], I conceived the idea to go South, where I could be of great use to my benighted people in the capacity of a teacher.

I selected Charleston, South Carolina as the basis of my operation. Accordingly I left Sandusky City for Cleveland, Ohio, thence to Buffalo, Rochester, Albany, Troy, Poughkeepsie and New York City, and embarked for the port of my destination.

Having taken up my quarters at Mrs. Cobb's boarding house in Calhoun Street, I soon became acquainted with Wright, Langston, Randolph, Bozeman, Ransier, and a host of other less notable Northern colored men who came there for political purposes.

All the above named were very able men, but, with the exception of the last named, who was truly a very good and honest man, I have a very little opinion of their honesty.

I soon got into employment as a teacher, and taught here about a year.

I am proud to say that I have gained the esteem of numerous white friends in Charleston, among which are Messrs. General Simmons, Kanapaux, Dr. Ogier, Sim, De Saussure, Chazal, Cohen, and a host of others who have shown me a great deal of favor.

I left Charleston for Savannah, Georgia, in the commencement of 1870, and only remaining here three days I left for Thomasville, Thomas County, Georgia.

While here I conceived the idea of writing my Biography or rather adventures. Several of my well-wishers to whom I communicated my idea said it was a very good thing.

The Editor of the *Thomasville Enterprise* gave me a most flattering notice in his paper, by which I gained many friends.

I accordingly set to work and wrote an essay to that effect consisting of about one hundred

pages. When I completed that, I proposed to give lectures on "Africa and Its Resources." I made my debut in Thomasville, then at Bainbridge, Albany, Americus, Macon, Griffin, and Atlanta. I soon got tired of that business which in fact did not yield me much profit, I left Atlanta, and got down to Forsyth in Monroe, where I took up a school sixteen miles from here in a village called Culloden.

I taught here six months and then retraced my steps to Thomasville where I had left my effects with a colored friend of mine, Solomon Harvey by name. To my no small disappointment he had left for Texas taking my goods with him.

After making arrangements as to the publication of my book, I started on a new plan, that of raising means by which to defray expenses of publication by *voluntary subscriptions*.

I have got a great many subscribers from Thomasville, Bainbridge, Quitman, Valdosta, Ga., Monticello, Madison, Tallahassee and Quincy, Florida. From Quincy I returned to Bainbridge thence to Early county Georgia, always meeting with success and good treatment from the white and black people.

While in Georgia and Florida, I had heard from the black people that Alabama was a very dangerous State and filled with Ku-Klux that the freedmen there did not know what freedom was owing to the oppression of the whites under which they were situated.

I was advised not to go to that State my life, they said, would be in great danger. My own common sense dictated to me, of course, that it was not possible that such a state of affairs could exist in Alabama, besides that, there were good and bad in all countries.

I shall here say, however, that it was thought by the blacks and a good number of whites I traveled for the purpose of spying through the country. Blacks were sent at times to pick me, but I had nothing to tell them excepting that I traveled for my own amusement and gratification, at the same time, making a little something which I hoped would enable me to publish my Adventures.

Some said I was harmless and quiet, and others that I was a Yankee emissary and a scoundrel.

I crossed the Chattahooche into Henry county, Alabama, and to my great surprise, was received with respect and kindness. I shall truly say, that I have never had such a reception heretofore.

I shall never forget the kindness and attention paid to my humble self by that most intelligent

and most gentlemanly Mr. M. Smith, of Columbia. When I left that place, after ten days stay, and was going to Abbeville, the county-seat, that kind man recommended me to Col. Oates, of that town:

COLUMBIA, ALA., July 21, 1871.

*Colonel Oates:*

The bearer, Nicholas Said, who is without a shadow of a doubt, a native African, and whose ostensible object in traveling through this country, is to obtain subscribers to his Autobiography, lectured here to-day.

And I am glad to say, gave entire satisfaction to his audience, which was composed of a goodly number of white and black people. He is, by far, the most intelligent, and the best educated man of the African race, with whom I have ever conversed, etc.

Any attention paid to Mr. Said will be thankfully received.

*I am, Colonel,  
Yours, most truly,  
M. SMITH.*

This letter did me an immense good in Abbeville, where I remained, and taught school until October of that year. I then went to Eufawla, Clayton, Troy, Montgomery, Selma, Greenville, Pineapple, Monroeville, Claiborne, Gainesville, and, finally to St. Stephens, Washington county, [Alabama] where I conceived the idea of *settling myself for life*.

On the 20th day of March, 1872, I found myself in St. Stephens, the county-seat of Washington County, Alabama, situated a few miles from the right bank of the Tombigbee river.

Here I felt an insurmountable desire to put an end to my peregrinations, that, is at least for a season; for I was perfectly exhausted, and as I had a notion to enlarge my Biography, and as the manuscript had become worn out, by constant handling; I had nothing better to do than to take a school somewhere, in order to accomplish my desired end.

Accordingly, on inquiry, I found that I could get one in the neighborhood of St. Stephens, and was suggested by Mr.—, one of the Trustees, to see one Dr. W. H. Coleman, who, it was said, lived six miles above that place on the road to Bladen Springs, in Choctaw county, Alabama.

This gentleman was, it was said, one of the county supervisors, whose duty it was to examine teachers, as to their qualifications.



Consequently, having received a note from Mr. Bailey, which ran thus:

*Dr. W. H. Coleman:*

SIR: The bearer, Nicholas Said, desires a situation in our neighborhood as a teacher, please to examine him and oblige,

*Yours,  
Most respectfully,  
THOMAS BAILEY.*

Armed with this document, I proceeded onward to Dr. Coleman's.

On entering the paling enclosure, I was informed that the Doctor was in the garden, and would be back in a few minutes.

Presently I saw him coming, and I asked him whether he was Dr. Coleman, and on being answered affirmatively, I presented the paper to him.

The Doctor appeared to be a man of about fifty years of age, with a kind and gentlemanly looking face and highly polished manners, and in stature something above the medium height.

His reception of me was quite flattering, for after my examination, I was asked whether I had been to breakfast; I told him I had not, whereupon "Bright," the servant girl, was called and instructed to furnish me with my breakfast.

This most kind and hospitable gentleman furthermore promised to *protect* me during my stay in his neighborhood; and I can truly say did more than he promised.

Shortly after I opened my school, the Doctor loaned me \$5.00, thereby showing that he had confidence in my honesty. Through his instrumentality, my name has become popular through Washington and Choctaw counties.

I shall, so long as life lasts, remember him with unfailing gratitude, and shall render myself not unworthy of his confidence and good opinion of me.

The colored people in this section of the country should certainly be grateful to him for his unwearied zeal in causing a school to be established in their midst.

But alas! Though painful to say, it is sadly true that my people here appreciate but slightly the benefits of education.

My honest and ardent desire is to render myself useful to my race wherever it may be. I have no aspirations for fame, nor anything of the sort. But

I shall always prefer at all times to find myself in the midst of the most ignorant of my race, and endeavor to teach the rising generation the advantages of education.

Self-denial is now-a-days so rare, that it is thought only individuals of insane mind can speak of it. A person who tries to live only for others, and puts himself in the second place, is hooted at, and considered a fit inmate for the asylum.

The man who artfully extorts the earning of his fellow-man, and who seems to have no feeling for his daily wants, is, by a strange perversion, deemed the wise.

To me, it is impossible to conceive how a human being can be happy through any other channel, than to do as much good as possible to his fellow-man in this world.



*Source: Autobiography of Nicholas Said; a Native of Bornou, Eastern Soudan, Central Africa. Memphis: Shotwell & Co., 1873, pp. 202–213.*

### **Said, Omar ibn** (ca. 1770–1864) *African-American Muslim slave and author*

Omar ibn Said is the author of the only surviving ARABIC slave AUTOBIOGRAPHY written in the United States. Born in Futa Toro, Senegal, in 1770 (the exact date is unknown), he was a student for 25 years, then a teacher, trader, and soldier. In 1807, one year before the United States outlawed the trans-Atlantic slave trade, he was captured in war, enslaved, shipped to Charleston, South Carolina, and sold to work on a rice plantation. He escaped but was arrested and jailed in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

Soon, citizens flocked to see a slave who wrote in a strange script on the walls of his cell. His mysterious reputation attracted James Owen, brother of North Carolina's former governor. Owen purchased ibn Said in 1811 and employed him as a gardener and house servant. He was also encouraged to write—a practice that soon became illegal for North Carolina's slaves. The Owen family preserved some of ibn Said's manuscripts and gave some to friends as gifts. Most of the writings consisted of inscriptions of Qur'anic verses, Arabic translations of the Lord's Prayer and the Twenty-third Psalm, and lists of the Owen family members. The family appeared to cherish their roles as benefactors to the exotic scholar. They especially welcomed numerous visits by Christian missionaries who were eager to talk to him, and presented him as a model African convert to Christianity.

With such visits came ibn Said's relative fame, which brought him an opportunity to correspond with Lamen Kebe, a West African coreligionist who lived at the time in NEW YORK CITY. Before slavery, both men had lived in Kaba, Mali, and quite possibly had shared acquaintances. As slaves, both tried to survive and perhaps return home. Both converted to Christianity, or at least presented themselves as converts. Unlike ibn Said, who remained in captivity with the Owen family until his death in 1864, Kebe was eventually freed after nearly 40 years of slavery. At the time of their correspondence, Kebe was trying to convince the American Colonization Society (ACS) to send him to Africa as a Christian missionary.

Ibn Said's conversion from Islam to Christianity reportedly took place in 1821. He attended a Presbyterian church but still visibly maintained some Muslim practices. In 1831, ibn Said wrote his autobiography while prompted by somebody he referred to as "Sheikh Hunter," possibly a visiting ACS member. He later sent it to Kebe, who in turn gave the manuscript to Theodore Dwight, an advocate of the Free Soil movement, which opposed the introduction of slavery in Western states, and a founder of the American Ethnological Society. Dwight arranged for the first English translation of ibn Said's manuscript in 1848, part of which was published in 1864.

The autobiography is the only source on ibn Said's life in which he writes extensively about himself. His descriptions are terse. He does not mention, for example, whether he was married or had children back in Africa (he had no family while in the United States). Neither does he provide any details of the military conflict that brought about his captivity. Although it is possible to speculate that he was captured during a series of armed conflicts that involved Abdul Kader Kane, Futa Toro's ruler, and that the French may have been involved in some way, the precise circumstances of his capture are unclear.

What is most striking about his autobiography is that ibn Said appears to put in doubt whether he ever relinquished his identity as a religious Muslim. Rather than beginning his documents with a Christian PRAYER or a passage from the Bible, he reproduced Qur'anic *Sura al-Mulk*, the chapter of "God's Dominion," a powerful statement that God alone is the master over creation. He continues with a short account of his life that emphasizes his Muslim piety and scholarship. He writes about his education, his parents and siblings, his teachers, his annual charitable donations, his participation in military expeditions against his ethnic group's enemies, and the pilgrimage to Mecca. While showering his current captors with compliments, he notes the abuse he suffered at the hands of his first slaveholder and stresses that "I reside in our country here because of the great harm." He appears to address two audiences: whites, who he probably

thought would gain access to a translation of the text, and his "brothers"—perhaps other African Muslims. The references he makes to his possible conversion are highly ambiguous. What is unambiguous is that he saturates the text with Muslim prayers and excerpts from the QUR'AN. He continued to do so in his other writings. In his last known manuscript, written in 1857, he was asked to inscribe the Lord's Prayer, which he had done before on numerous occasions. Instead, he wrote the Qur'anic *Sura al-Nasr*, the chapter of "Victory," and signed: "My name is Omar."

Because ibn Said's Arabic shielded him from the full control of his captors/benefactors, his writings provide a rare glimpse into enslaved Africans' strategies of resistance. He is monumentally important in the history of Islam in America, recognized by Muslims in Fayetteville who named one of their mosques after him. His autobiography had been missing for most of the last century but was rediscovered in 1995 in an old trunk in Virginia and sold at an auction to Tariq Beard, a prominent African-American collector, who has offered it for public viewing in BOSTON, New York, and in 2008 in Jackson, Mississippi.

Timur Yuskaev

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### "The Life of Omar ibn Said, Written by Himself" (1831)

*As a Muslim adolescent who came of age in West Africa, Omar ibn Said (pronounced Sayyid, ca. 1770–1864) had intensively studied the Qur'an and other Islamic texts. In 1807, he was captured, enslaved, and transported to South Carolina. His autobiography, which he wrote in Arabic in 1831, several years after he officially converted to Christianity, is the only surviving slave autobiography written in Arabic. It is a short document, most of which is reprinted below. Its origins are obscure. Prompted to write it by a man he referred to as "Sheikh Hunter," ibn Said later sent it to his friend Lamen Kebe, who in turn gave it to ethnologist Theodore Dwight, who had it translated in 1848 and published in 1864. Although nominally a Christian, ibn Said begins his autobiography not with a quote from the Bible but with ayat, or verses, from Sura al-Mulk, the 67th chapter of the Qur'an, which explains God's dominion*

over the heavens and the earth. This strategically placed preface may have been ibn Said's way of saying that though he was temporarily enslaved by a human, everything in creation was ultimately the property of God. The comments in brackets were added by translator and editor, Ala A. Alryyes.



In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. Thanks be to Allah, for his goodness of old, his generosity and favor. To him is majesty due. Thanks be to Him who created the creation for His worship, so He may judge their deeds and words.

From Omar to Sheikh Hunter: You asked me to write my life. I cannot write my life for I have forgotten much of my talk [language] as well as the talk of the Arabs. Also I know little grammar and little vocabulary. O my brothers, I ask you in the name of Allah, not to blame me for my eye is weak and so is my body.

My name is Omar Ibn Said; my birthplace if Fut Tur, between the two rivers [or seas]. I sought knowledge according to the instructions [original reads *wujud* or presence] of a Sheikh called Mohammad Said, my brother, and Sheikh Suleiman Kimba and Sheikh Jebril [i.e., Gabriel] Abdal. I continued seeking knowledge for twenty-five years, [then] I came to my place [and stayed] for six years. [Then there] came to our country a big army. It killed many people, it took me, and walked me to the big Sea, and sold me into the hand of a Christian man (*Nasrani*) who bought me and walked me to the big Ship in the big Sea.

We sailed in the big Sea for a month and a half until we came to a place called Charleston. And in a Christian language, they sold me. A weak, small, evil man called Johnson, and infidel (*Kafir*) who did not fear Allah at all, bought me.

I am a small man who cannot do hard work; I escape[d], from the hands of Johnson after a month, and walked to a place called Faydel. I saw houses after a month; I entered the houses to pray. I saw a young man who was riding horses, then his father came to the place. He spoke to his father that he saw a Sudanese man in the house. A man called Hindah together with another man riding a horse with many dogs took me walking with them for twelve miles to a place called Faydel. They took me to a big house [building]. I could not come out of the big house—called *jeel* [i.e., jail] in the Christian language—for sixteen days and nights.

On Friday, a man came and opened the door of the big house, and I saw many men whose language was Christian. They called to me; is not your name Omar, is it not Said? I did not understand [hear] the Christian language. I saw a man called Bob Mumford speaking [to the jailer?]. He took me out of the big house. I consented very much to walk with them to their place. I stayed in Mumford's place for four days and nights. A man called Jim Owen, the husband of Mumford's daughter, Betsy Mumford, asked me: "Do you consent to walk to a place called Bladen?" I said, "Yes." I agreed to walk with them I have stayed in Jim Owen's place until now.

Before I came into the hands of General Owen, a man called Mitchell came to buy me. Mitchell asked me: "Would you walk to a place called Charleston?" I said: "No, no, no, no, no, no, no—I will not walk to the place Charleston; I will stay in the hands of Jim Owen."

O, people of North Carolina; o, people of South Carolina; o, people of America, all of you; are there among you men as good as Jim Owen and [his brother] John Owen? They are good men for whatever they eat, eat; and whatever they wear they give me to wear. Jim with his brother read from the Bible (*Ingeel*) that Allah is our Lord, our Creator, and our Owner and the restorer of our condition, health and wealth by grace and not duty. [According?] to my ability, open my heart to the right path, to the path of Jesus Christ, to a great light.

Before I came to the Christian country, my religion was/is the religion of Mohammad, the prophet of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. I used to walk to the mosque (*masjid*) before dawn, and to wash my face, hands, feet. I [also] used to hold the noon prayers, the afternoon prayers, the sunset prayers, the night prayers.

I used to give alms (*zakat*) every year in gold, silver, harvest, cattle, sheep, goats, rice, wheat and barley—all I used to give in alms. I used to join the *Jihad* every year against the infidels (*Kuffar*). I used to walk to Mecca and Medinah as did those who were able. My father had six sons and five daughters, and my mother had three sons and one daughter. When I left my country, I was thirty-seven years old. I have been residing in the Christian country for twenty-four years.

In the year eight hundred and thirty and one (1831) [after] Jesus Christ.

O, people of North Carolina; O, people of South Carolina; O, people of America, all of you: The first son of Jim Owen is called Thomas and his sister is called Maas Jen [Martha Jane?].

This is a good generation (*Geel*). Tom Owen and Nell Owen had two sons and one daughter. The first boy is called Jim and the other John; the girl is called Melissa. Master (*Sayyid*) Jim and his wife Betsy Owen have two sons and five daughters. They are Tom, John, Martha, Miriam, Sophia, Margaret and Lisa. This generation is a very good generation.

And John Owen's wife is called Lucy. A good wife, she had three children and then two. Three died and two remained.

O, people of America; O, people of North Carolina: do you have, do you have, do you have, do you have such a good generation that fears Allah so much?

I am Omar, I love to read the book, the Great Koran.

General Jim Owen and his wife used to read the Bible, they used to read the Bible to me a lot. Allah is our Lord, our Creator, and our Owner and the restorer of our condition, health and wealth by grace and not duty. [According?] to my ability, open my heart to the Bible, to the path of righteousness. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Worlds, many thanks for he grants bounty in abundance.

Because the law (*Shara'*) was to Moses given, but grace and truth were by Jesus the Messiah.

First, [following] Mohammed. To pray, I said: "Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds; the Compassionate, the Merciful; Sovereign (*Malik*) of the Day of Judgment; It is you we worship, and to you we turn for help; Guide us to the straight path; The path of those whom you have favored with grace; Not of those who have incurred Your wrath; Nor of those who have strayed. Amen."

And [but?] now, I pray in the words of our Lord Jesus the Messiah: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one for thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

I reside in our country here because of the great harm. The infidels took me unjustly and sold me into the hands of the Christian man (*Nasrani*) who bought me. We sailed on the big sea for a month and a half to a place called Charleston in the Christian

language. I fell into the hands of a small, weak, and wicked man who did not fear Allah at all, nor did he read nor pray. I was afraid to stay with such a wicked man who committed many evil deeds so I escaped. After a month, Allah our Lord presented us into the hands of a righteous man who fears Allah, and who loves to do good deeds and whose name is General Jim Owen and whose brother is called Colonel John Owen. These are two righteous men. I am in a place called Bladen County.

I continue in the hands of Jim Owen who does not beat me, nor calls me bad names, nor subjects me to hunger, nakedness, or hard work. I cannot do hard work for I am a small, ill man. During the last twenty years I have not seen any harm at the hands of Jim Owen.



Source: Ala A. Alryyes, trans. "The Life of Omar ibn Said, Written by Himself." In *The Multilingual Anthology of American Literature*, edited by Marc Shell and Wernor Sollors, 75–93. New York: New York University Press, 2000.

## Salafi Muslims

A social movement within Sunni Islam, Salafi Muslims are a global REVIVALISM movement. Taking their name from *al-salaf al-salih*, the "pious predecessors" of the first three generations of Muslims, contemporary Salafi Muslims seek to recover the original Islam that they believe has been corrupted by centuries of unsanctioned change. Less than 10 percent of Muslim Americans are Salafis. Their DRESS, views on gender relations, RELIGIOUS LIFE, and views on POLITICS are socially conservative. While certainly countercultural, however, most Salafi Muslim Americans explicitly oppose violence and radical movements such as al-Qaeda.

### ORIGINS OF SALAFISM

While Salafis themselves see their origins extending back to the seventh century, historians date the inception of Salafism to late 19th-century Egypt. Spearheaded by scholars such as Muhammad 'Abduh and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Salafism was a reform movement that sought to make Islam compatible with modernity. By the end of the 20th century, however, Salafi Muslims had become increasingly separatist, generally choosing to remain aloof from the secular institutions and civic practices of the modern world.

From the Salafi perspective, Salafism is not a modern movement; rather, it is a return to the fixed, timeless, authentic Islam practiced at the time of the prophet MUHAMMAD but marginalized thereafter. Seeing themselves as fierce defenders



of *tawhid*—or monotheism, the belief in one God—Salafi Muslims police Islamic practice from the influence of *bid'ah*, or impermissible innovation, and *shirk*, the sin of placing someone or something on par with God. Challenging the traditional authority of the four Sunni schools of law, Salafi Muslims see their jurisprudence as rooted directly in the authority of the QUR'AN and the Sunna, or the tradition of the prophet Muhammad. In practice, however, Salafi reading of scripture and tradition is heavily influenced by the Hanbali school of LAW, in particular by 14th-century scholar Ibn Taymiyya and 18th-century reformer Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, as well as by contemporary Saudi Arabian jurists.

On account of Salafism's literalist, populist approach to scripture and its conservative social ethos, Western scholars often draw analogies between Salafism and American Christianity, describing the movement in terms such as "the Protestant reformers of Islam," "Puritan Islam," "Evangelical," and "neo-Fundamentalist." Salafi Muslims reject such categorizations. Some Salafi would also reject the more commonly used designation, WAHHABISM, though critics such as KHALED ABOU EL FADL (1963– ) maintain that there is by now little difference between the two identities.

#### AMERICAN SALAFIS

Precursors to present-day Salafism can be located on American shores as early as 1939 or before, when Daoud Ahmad Faisal founded the Islamic Mission of America in Brooklyn, New York. In dialogue with immigrant Muslims and African-American converts, Faisal confrontationally promoted Islam as an antidote to the excesses of commercialism, corrupt political power, and imperialism. In subsequent decades, Salafi ideas and practices trickled in with students, visitors, and refugees from the Middle East, contributing to the hodgepodge of forms that during the 1950s and 1960s were grouped under the category of "orthodox."

It was not until the 1970s that Muslim Americans began to identify themselves or their ISLAMIC THOUGHT as Salafi. The early adopters were AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS who traveled to Saudi Arabia to study Islam. Some of these Muslims, such as Jamaican-born Abu Ameenah Bilal Phillips, translated key Salafi texts from Arabic into English and authored original scholarship as well. By the 1990s, Salafi ideas and practices were spread through the annual conferences of smaller organizations such as the Islamic Assembly of North America and the Qur'an and Sunnah Society of North America. From the days of Faisal's mission before WORLD WAR II to the early 21st century, Salafism's growth in the United States has been driven by Saudi funding, both public and private, which has sponsored American exchange scholars, mosque-building, and the distribution of books and curriculums.

While Salafi Muslims can be found across the United States, the phenomenon is largely an East Coast one. Salafi mosques, bookstores, and schools can be found in largest numbers in urban centers such as NEW YORK CITY, East Orange, New Jersey, PHILADELPHIA, and Washington, D.C. According to a poll conducted by University of Kentucky professor Ihsan Bagby, 8 percent of practicing Muslim Americans favored Salafism over other interpretations of Islam, and the majority of these were African American.

#### PRACTICE AND CONFLICT

On account of their separatist ethos, converts to Salafi Islam are known to have fractured relationships with the non-Muslim members of their families. Similarly, in their zeal to purge Islamic practice of all nonoriginal elements, Salafi Muslims do not always foster the easiest of relations to other Muslims. Rather, they are often resented for what is perceived as their legalism, their antagonistic style and their alleged propensity for *takfir*, the labeling of others as infidels. Because Salafi Muslims regard the Qur'an and Sunna as providing a comprehensive guide for how to live Islamically, disputes with other Muslims are not limited to the specifics of ritual practice but cross over into the cultural realm as well. From a staunch Salafi perspective, just as exchanging a Ramadan greeting not explicitly used in the seventh century is an innovation, listening to popular music runs the risk of placing something on par with God.

In their pursuit of Islamic authenticity and in a way of marking themselves as distinct, Salafi Muslim Americans dress in a distinctly Arabian style. Salafi men tend to grow their beards long and don either a *thobe*—an Arabian one-piece garment—or hem their pant legs above the ankle, a practice known as *isbaal*. Salafi women generally wear black *niqabs*, one-piece garments that cover everything but the eyes. By means of their alternative styles of dress, Salafi Muslims offer a critique of American consumer culture even as they adopt the same consumerist techniques to enact their identity.

Somewhat ironically, given Salafism's pervasive critique of modern, secular culture, Salafi Muslims have been especially deft at exploiting the tools of new media to disseminate their ideas. In the 1980s and 1990s, Salafi doctrine was spread by cassette tape with the selling and trading of recorded sermons and lectures. Since the 1990s, Salafi Muslims have used the INTERNET to disseminate their message, broadcasting their missionary call around the country and the globe at Web sites such as salafipublications.com and SalafiTalk.net.

Since the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, a key goal of such Web sites has been to distinguish Salafism from the violent extremism of al-Qaeda and the Taliban. A key text in this effort has been Haneef James Oliver's *The 'Wahhabi' Myth* (2009), whose subtitle promises to "dispel . . . prevalent fallacies and the fictitious link with [Osama]

Bin Laden." The post-9/11 era has been difficult for Salafi Americans. The most prominent example was the 2003–04 prosecutions of the so-called paintball Jihadists of the "Virginia Jihad Network," in which 11 men were charged and nine convicted of various terrorism-related offenses. In 2005, Iraqi-American biologist and prominent Salafi lecturer Ali al-Timimi was sentenced to life in prison for exhorting his followers to wage holy war. As a consequence of this fraught political climate, it is generally thought that the Salafi movement in America is on the wane.

Joshua Dubler

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**Sambo** See MOUNT VERNON.

### Saviour's Day

Celebrated every year on February 26, Saviour's Day is a Muslim-American HOLIDAY, instituted by NATION OF ISLAM

(NOI) leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD in 1950 to commemorate the life and work of W. D. FARD, the founder of the NOI, who members believed was God. Beginning in the 1950s, NOI members traveled from their temples across the United States to attend the annual convention in CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. By 1975, the mayors of many cities, such as Chicago; Oakland; Berkeley; LOS ANGELES; Gary; NEWARK, NEW JERSEY; and ATLANTA, among others, proclaimed Saviour's Day to be Nation of Islam Day because of the movement's popularity among their residents.

Celebrations of Saviour's Day began with the customary Opening PRAYER (in English rather than ARABIC), which is the first chapter of the QUR'AN, called *al-fatiha*. This was followed by high-spirited speakers who would each say a few words as part of the service, reminding people of the blessed day. They encouraged participants to give to charity and to purchase the line of items sold by community members. Like many conventions, Saviour's Day included sales of goods: for example, believers purchased pork-free meals, new editions of the community newspaper, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, and literature, in the bazaarlike atmosphere outside the main speech area. In addition, informal networking between members from across the country took place on business matters.

The main speaker at Saviour's Day gatherings was the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, who outlined Fard's teachings for the benefit of members and non-Muslim visitors. He generally spoke for about an hour at the convention on such themes as the origins of the NOI, the mission story of Fard, the legitimacy of the group, leadership, and the loyalty and generosity of followers. The goal of attendees was to demonstrate loyalty to Muhammad's mission to achieve "freedom, justice, and equality" for all black people. Every element of the ritual, from the DRESS people wore to the speeches given, was designed to create a happy spirit of unity and peace of mind to any onlooker listening to the greetings of the believers of *as-salaam alaikum* (Peace be unto you) and the reply of *wa alaikum as-salaam* (and Peace be unto you) in the Arabic language. Female members wore long, flowing white gowns and white head scarves as they sat together, creating the vision of a sea of white for the onlooker. Most men displayed their FRUIT OF ISLAM (FOI) blue uniforms, although some wore brown ones, with bow ties and long ties. They sat together, also creating an air of discipline, particularly with their demonstration of a more public role in the convention. The FOI provided security for the event, carefully monitoring the stage area and managing the crowd, attempting to create an orderly and safe environment in the convention center where the event was held.

The commemoration of Saviour's Day continued in the NOI after Elijah Muhammad's death in 1975 until his son, W. D. MOHAMMED, put an end to it in 1978. Mohammed,



Members of the Nation of Islam attend a Saviour's Day convention in Chicago in 1972. (AP Images)

who was attempting to lead NOI members toward a Sunni interpretation of Islam, acknowledged the contributions of NOI founder W. D. Fard but explicitly rejected the notion that Fard was God in the flesh, a belief that other Muslim Americans found heretical. Minister LOUIS FARRAKHAN disagreed with Mohammed's changes, however, and in 1978 recreated a version of the NOI based on the original teachings of Elijah Muhammad, including the belief that Fard was God. Farrakhan also rejuvenated the commemoration of Saviour's Day. Another claimant to the legacy of Elijah Muhammad, Minister Silis Muhammad, did so as well, and the practice of this uniquely Muslim-American holiday thus continued in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

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#### Schuon, Frithjof (1907–1998) *founder of the Maryamiyya Sufi Order*

Frithjof Schuon, known among his followers as 'Isa Nur al-Din, was an author, poet, painter, and Sufi teacher who founded the MARYAMIYYA SUFI ORDER. An outgrowth of the 'Alawiyya-Shadhiliyya, a North African Sufi lineage into which Schuon was initiated in Algeria, the Maryamiyya as a



distinct order seems to have emerged from a series of powerful visions of the Virgin Mary that occurred to Schuon beginning in 1965.

Born in Basle, Switzerland, on June 18, 1907, into a German Catholic family, Schuon became interested in spiritual matters at an early age and first encountered Islam while working as a textile designer in Paris. Late in 1932, he traveled to Algeria where the next year he was initiated into Sufism by the Shadhili Sufi master Ahmad al-'Alawi. For many years Schuon led a small, secretive group of European Sufi disciples based mainly in Lausanne and Basle, although he counted followers from across Europe.

In 1946, Schuon was declared an independent master by his disciples rather than just a *muqaddam*, or “deputy,” of the Algerian Sufi order into which he was originally initiated. In effect, this allowed Schuon to create his own Sufi order. He traveled widely from the 1950s to the early 1970s, a period during which he studied Native American art, religion, and culture among the Sioux and Crow Indians in the western United States. In 1980, Schuon and his wife, Catherine, moved from Switzerland to Bloomington, Indiana, where he quietly taught a small circle of American followers in a forested residential community called Inverness Farms.

On Christmas Eve 1985, Schuon experienced a particularly powerful vision of the Virgin Mary in which she appeared to him disrobed, an experience that appears to have led Schuon to begin promoting mystical exercises involving ritual nudity among his disciples. In 1991, a disillusioned member of the order brought a legal case against Schuon, who was subsequently indicted by a grand jury on felony charges of child molestation and sexual battery. A number of Schuon's more prominent followers vocally denounced the charges as false in the local press, and the prosecutor eventually dropped the case, citing insufficient evidence. Schuon died in his home at Inverness Farms in Bloomington on May 5, 1998.

Schuon was a prolific author, and his works have had a marked, although not always explicit, impact on the Western academic study of Sufism and other mystical traditions as well as, to a lesser extent, on Muslim intellectualist circles in the West, largely through the aegis of scholars such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Houston Smith. Deeply influenced by the thought of the French metaphysician René Guénon, Schuon's writings championed two interrelated ideas. First, there was the doctrine of the *sophia perennis*, or the “perennial wisdom” that was understood to animate all authentic systems of religious expression. This is normally called Perennialism. Second, there was the idea that secular modern life must be rejected in favor of traditional sacred doctrines. This is normally called Traditionalism. Among his many works addressing Islam, his *Understanding Islam* (1963) was particularly well received in both the Muslim world and the West.

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## sema

*Sema*, literally “audition,” is a meditative dance practiced most commonly by members of the MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER, a group of Islamic mystics. Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi, a Persian poet and theologian, inspired the movement in 13th-century Turkey, and according to traditional accounts, his son Sultan Veled established the Mevlevi Order and began the practice of *sema* on the day of Rumi's death on December 17, 1273.

*Sema* is a form of *DHIKR*, or remembrance of God. Those who perform the *sema*, known as *semazens*, have often been referred to as “whirling dervishes,” because they spin round and round as part of the prayer ritual. *Semazens* wear *tennure*, a traditional costume, made of long white robes and a tall hat. The *semazens* rotate counterclockwise within a group of others, pivoting on the left foot. Each rotates counterclockwise around an axis and the *halka*, or circle. *Semazens* begin with their arms folded, then spread them wide with the right palm up and the left palm down. During this dance, *semazens* become closer to God by opening themselves up to his presence and letting the stresses of life fade away.

Since the early 1950s, Americans have observed *sema* both abroad and at home. Though some Sufi lodges and religious orders were banned in Turkey in 1925, later republican governments of Turkey allowed *sema* to be practiced in the form of public shows controlled by the Ministry of Culture. In 1953, the show was commercialized in the West and traveled to sold-out performances in the United States and Europe. The term *whirling dervish* had been used widely since the 1800s to denote spiritual ecstasy and even mystical madness, and audiences flocked to see the “authentic” stage performance of the ritual. The Mevlevi presence in the United States most likely existed in some form earlier, but the Mevlevi Order of America offered professional *sema* lessons in the 1970s, furthering the practice of *sema* in American culture. Mevlevi Master Suleyman Hayati Dede traveled from Konya, Turkey, to teach in the West, especially in the United States. In 1978, Dede's son, Sheikh Jelaluddin Loras, traveled



to Northern California to begin American Mevlevi training and founded the order. The Mevlevi Order of America offered regular classes and seminars and held public events and holiday celebrations. The largest was *Shebi Aruz*, the anniversary of Rumi's death.

American versions of the *sema* attempt to engage the uninitiated in the ritual. As American Sufi master SAMUEL LEWIS, also known as Sufi Sam, put it: "The watcher is the prayerful devotee; the dancer is Divine." In Shakina Reinhertz's book, *Women Called to the Path of Rumi: The Way of the Whirling Dervish* (2001), she describes the *sema*-zen and the audience as blending into a transformed space where human and divine meet. The audience feels the connection to the divine; Reinhertz attributes to this how many observers come into the tradition.

The entrance of *sema* into American culture came first as an exotic wonder that could be marketed and sold as entertainment. But during the countercultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s, more and more Americans began to understand the ritual as a legitimate method of spiritual practice. The Mevlevi Order of America is but one of many established Sufi organizations that now serve local communities and has made the seemingly foreign religious ritual of *sema* a regular feature of American culture.

Andrew O'Brien

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#### September 11, 2001

On the morning of September 11, 2001, 19 Saudi Arabian and Egyptian members of al-Qaeda, a radical and violent Muslim political group that opposes the United States, Israel, and most Muslim governments, hijacked and crashed two large passenger jets into both towers of the World Trade Center in NEW YORK CITY and one into the Pentagon, the Department of Defense headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, near Washington, D.C. A fourth hijacked jet, apparently bound for the White House or the U.S. Capitol, crashed in Pennsylvania. Approximately 3,000 people were murdered that day. The attack destroyed the twin towers—the tallest buildings in New York—and caused considerable damage to the Pentagon. Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, later explained that the attacks were revenge for the suffering caused by U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Both before and after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, as the day came to be

known, al-Qaeda leaders justified what they called a jihad, or struggle, against the United States because of its strong support of Israel, its leadership of the war against Iraq in 1991, its military bases in the Persian Gulf, and its support for corrupt regimes in the Middle East.

Muslim-American leaders immediately denounced the attacks. The American Muslim Political Coordination Council, which represented the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR), the MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL, the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA, and other groups plainly stated that "American Muslims utterly condemn what are apparently vicious and cowardly acts of terrorism against innocent civilians. We join with all Americans in calling for the swift apprehension and punishment of the perpetrators. No political cause could ever be assisted by such immoral acts." The ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA said that "Islam does not permit such unjust acts." Individual Muslim Americans also expressed their dismay over the attacks, laying flowers outside the Muslim Council Center in Washington, D.C., donating blood to Red Cross blood drives across the nation, raising money for the mayor's 9/11 fund in



Mohammad Chowdhury, who waited tables at Windows on the World, a restaurant atop the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City, was killed in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. His wife, Baraheen Ashrafi, gave birth two days later to their son Farqad Chowdhury, who is pictured here along with his sister, Fahina Chowdhury. (Erica Berger/Corbis)

New York, and flying the U.S. flag in solidarity outside their homes and places of worship.

Muslim Americans across the country also harbored a great deal of fear of the DISCRIMINATION and retributive violence that they might face as a result of the attacks. Despite their pleas, and those of many non-Muslim leaders, including President George W. Bush, for calm and compassion, the negative reaction against Muslim Americans, and those who “looked” Muslim, was immediate. In a hate crime in Mesa, Arizona, on September 15, 2001, Balbir Singh Sodhi, a gas station owner, became the first person to be killed in revenge for the attacks, even though he was not a Muslim but a Sikh. Immediately before the murder, a man named Frank Roque was heard at a local bar saying that he was going to “kill the rag heads responsible for September 11.” Perhaps as many as seven others were murdered in the immediate aftermath of 9/11.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), hate crimes against Muslims and Arabs in the United States rose 1,700 percent from 2000 to 2001. The Council on American-Islamic Relations received reports of 1,062 violent, threatening, and harassing incidents during the initial onslaught of the post-9/11 backlash and counted 2,250 victims of bias-motivated harassment and violence during their 2001/2002 reporting year. The AMERICAN-ARAB ANTI-DISCRIMINATION COMMITTEE reported more than 700 violent incidents targeting Arab and Muslim Americans, or those perceived to be, in the first nine weeks after the attacks and another 165 occurring between January 1 and October 11, 2002. The risk of death was highest in the first few weeks after the attacks; over time minor assaults, verbal harassment, and vandalism of private property and institutions, especially mosques, became the most prominent form of backlash. Muslim women wearing head scarves proved to be particularly vulnerable to public attack.

Seven days after the 9/11 attacks, U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft announced that the FBI had received more than 96,000 tips and potential leads to terrorists from the American public, many of which targeted Muslim Americans. This broad public response serves as a good indicator of the collective suspicion that was cast on Muslim Americans. Government agents followed up on these tips, resulting in tens of thousands of FBI and police visits to Muslim-American homes and places of employment. Public fears and suspicion were kept at a high pitch during the first few years after the attacks as the mainstream American media remained focused on the potential presence of terrorist sleeper cells hiding in Muslim-American communities. The Bush administration also implemented a wide range of domestic security policies after the attacks that focused on Muslim-American and Arab-American communities. These included mass arrests, preventive detentions, FBI interviews,

registration and fingerprinting of male foreign nationals, widespread wiretapping, secret hearings, criminal indictments, and reviews of private Internet, telecommunication, and financial records. Of the 37 security-related initiatives launched between September 12, 2001, and mid-2003, 25 of them focused, either directly or indirectly, on Muslim and Arab Americans. First to be caught in the post-9/11 dragnet were some 1,200 Muslim and Arab males (presumably non-citizens) arrested across the country, but especially in cities such as DETROIT and LOS ANGELES, where there was a high percentage of first-generation Muslim Americans, permanent residents, and foreign visitors.

Many of the detainees, who did not have access to legal counsel or their families, were mistreated, according to a 2003 report from the Department of Justice’s Office of Inspector General. The report, which officially censured the FBI’s handling of the cases, found a pattern of abuse including “unnecessary” body searches—including cavity searches—that appeared “intended to punish.” The exact identities and final fates of these persons remain unknown because the U.S. government has not released information about them; what is known is that none were charged with having terrorist connections. Other government programs—such as the special registration of some 80,000 Muslims and Arabs on temporary visas, FBI interviews of tens of thousands of Muslims living permanently in the United States, and 5,000 preventive detentions—also failed to net a single conviction for a terrorist crime, although thousands were deported for visa violations in what legal scholar David Cole has called the “most aggressive national campaign of ethnic profiling since WORLD WAR II.”

While the U.S. government claimed to have broken up domestic terrorist cells in or around Buffalo, Detroit, Portland, Seattle, and northern Virginia, none of these groups had proven plans to inflict damage on the United States, and only one, the so-called Lackawanna Six, from Lackawanna, New York, near Buffalo, had an arguable al-Qaeda connection. Criminal indictments in “terrorism-related” cases concluded between 2001 and 2005 showed 200 convictions from more than 400 indictments, but very few of these convictions were for terrorism. Perhaps the most embarrassing of these cases for the FBI was the detention of Oregon lawyer BRANDON MAYFIELD, who was wrongly accused of aiding the 2004 bombings of commuter trains in Madrid, Spain. In November 2006, the FBI apologized to Mayfield for its mistake and paid him \$2 million in restitution.

The United States Treasury Department closed six Muslim-American charities and seized their assets after the 9/11 attacks. Of the six, only one, the Holy Land Foundation, faced charges for support of terrorism, and in 2008, five of its officials were found guilty of terrorism-related charges stemming from their \$12.4 million donation to Hamas, the

Palestinian political party. Criminal charges were dropped against two other Muslim-American charities, and no charges were filed for the other three. Despite the lack of charges and convictions against these organizations, the assets of all of these charities remained frozen by the government.

The U.S. government's handling of Muslim and Arab Americans provoked distrust, fear, and alienation in these communities, which were repeatedly charged with being unsupportive of government antiterrorism strategies—a claim that members of these communities firmly rejected. Indeed, prominent Muslim-American leaders and organizations called on the government to work with them rather than harass them. Muslim Americans were also negatively affected by the stereotyping and broad suspicion cast upon them by the government and media and felt the silent stares of stigma, suspicion, and hatred in their workplaces and on the streets.

Despite all the negative trends, Muslim Americans had varying post-9/11 experiences at the individual and local community levels, where Muslim Americans were often the subjects of compassion and empathy rather than fear or anger. Many Americans rejected notions of collective guilt or of a Muslim threat to American culture, and some members of the American public organized to protect Muslim Americans and their institutions and to protest unfair treatment. In TOLEDO, OHIO, for example, 2,000 community members, both Muslims and non-Muslims, joined hands outside the Islamic Center of Toledo, whose stained-glass windows had been damaged by gunfire in retribution for the 9/11 attacks. Led by Cheriffe Kadri, the president of the mosque, they prayed for peace and protection. Many non-Muslim Americans showed a rising interest in learning about Islam and Muslims, while Muslim Americans sought increased religious knowledge as well, in order to advance their capacity to answer the queries of others as well as their own questions.

In many locations across the United States since 9/11, Muslim Americans have experienced a level of community mobilization, civic engagement, and coalition participation nearly unprecedented in Muslim-American history. While the Muslim-American capacity to influence government policies at levels higher than the local remained quite limited, a broad multiracial and multiethnic Muslim-American assertion of civic responsibilities and demand for civil rights became stronger than ever before. On the national level, the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Friends Service Committee, and other public interest groups joined Muslim-American organizations in filing lawsuits or advocating for the civil rights of Muslim Americans. On the local level, Americans committed to INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS became part of each other's lives; in Indianapolis, Indiana, for example, the Peace Learning Center and Indiana, Purdue

University Indianapolis School of Education organized an exchange of students among three parochial schools: one Jewish, one Christian, one Muslim.

These seeds of optimism for Muslim Americans were direct outcomes of the government policies, popular backlash, and enhanced anti-Muslim rhetoric that followed the 9/11 attacks, as Muslims and non-Muslims rose up to challenge undemocratic policies, popular political violence, and Islamophobia. The 9/11 attacks and the official and popular responses to them crystallized a sociopolitical crisis for Muslim Americans, a crisis whose eventual denouement would be positive in the view of many Muslim Americans. When Muslim Americans mobilized to defend and protect their community members and institutions, their civil rights, immigrant rights, and religious rights, they intersected with other groups in American society in new and deeper ways. At their meeting point, "us" and "them" merged symbolically into new and different configurations.

Hate crimes and attacks on Muslim institutions spurred the immediate activism of neighborhood, regional, and national coalitions, all of which embraced Muslim-American organizations. The work of many other groups left a handprint on this post-9/11 mobilization story: human rights organizations investigating abuses of prisoners, private philanthropies supporting community defense work, civil rights attorneys defending the falsely accused, immigrant coalitions marching in protest against government excesses, ethnic organizations calling for an end to collective profiling, community organizers conducting civil rights teach-ins and special registration monitoring, mosques organizing open houses, neighborhood organizations forming mosque defense committees, interfaith groups speaking out against hate crimes, school girls exchanging solidarity visits, and local and national Muslim-American organizations taking on a broader range of tasks than ever before under emergency conditions. The support of others for Muslim-American claims to full national belonging and citizenship pulled them in from the margins of social exclusion, accelerating their social integration into American society. Muslim Americans not only worked in coalition with other groups; they increasingly became part of them, hired as staff and recruited as volunteers.

Overall, the post-9/11 Muslim American experience was paradoxical: pushed out by some and embraced by others in American society. While Muslim Americans experienced extensive institutional discrimination, civil rights abuses, stereotyping, government targeting, and public attack, they also experienced enhanced inclusion in civil society organizations. Muslim Americans of all racial and ethnic origins, their organizations, and institutions became visible players in the American public square to a greater degree than ever before. This civic inclusion was by no means evenly distributed across the nation nor was it uncontested, but it was

nonetheless palpable. This perhaps unexpected positive outcome emerged from the dynamic that was put into motion when state repression, public attacks, and popular vilification rather quickly reached a level that was intolerable to Muslim Americans and to some American institutions and individuals. Muslim Americans emerged from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in a much different social position from that they held prior to the attacks.

*Louise Cainkar and Edward E. Curtis IV*

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### Suheir Hammad

#### "first writing since" (2001)

*Suheir Hamad (1973– ) was already well known among New York's literary circles before the al-Qaeda attacks of September 11, 2001, but she became a national literary figure after publishing "first writing since" on November 7, 2001. In 2003, she received a Tony Award for her writing and performance in Russell Simmons Presents Def Comedy Jam on Broadway. Since then, her poetry has been anthologized in dozens of collections. "first writing since" captured her feelings as a person of multiple identities in the wake of the 9/11 attacks: a New Yorker who had been traumatized by the event, a Palestinian called on to explain the actions of the terrorists, a humanist concerned about New Yorkers' collective howl for revenge, the sister of a U.S. military member concerned about going to war, and a critic angry about the hypocrisy of U.S. foreign policy.*



1. there have been no words.  
i have not written one word.  
no poetry in the ashes south of canal street.

no prose in the refrigerated trucks driving debris  
and dna.  
not one word.

today is a week, and seven is of heavens, gods,  
science.  
evident out my kitchen window is an abstract  
reality.  
sky where once was steel.  
smoke where once was flesh.

fire in the city air and i feared for my sister's life  
in a way never  
before. and then, and now, i fear for the rest of us.

first, please god, let it be a mistake, the pilot's  
heart failed, the plane's engine died.  
then please god, let it be a nightmare, wake me  
now.

please god, after the second plane, please, don't  
let it be anyone who looks like my brothers.

i do not know how bad a life has to break in  
order to kill.

i have never been so hungry that i willed hunger  
i have never been so angry as to want to control  
a gun over a pen.

not really.

even as a woman, as a palestinian, as a broken  
human being.

never this broken.

more than ever, i believe there is no difference.  
the most privileged nation, most americans do  
not know

the difference between indians, afghanis, syrians,  
muslims, sikhs, hindus.

more than ever, there is no difference.

2. thank you korea for kimchi and bibimbab,  
and corn tea and the genteel smiles of the wait  
staff at wonjo—the smiles never revealing the  
heat of the food or how tired they must be  
working long midtown shifts. thank you korea,  
for the belly craving that brought me into the  
city late the night before and diverted my daily  
train ride into the world trade center.

there are plenty of thank yous in ny right now.  
thank you for my lazy procrastinating late ass.  
thank you to the germs that had me call in  
sick. thank you, my attitude, you had me fired  
the week before. thank you for the train that  
never came, the rude nyr who stole my cab  
going downtown. thank you for the sense my



mama gave me to run. thank you for my legs,  
my eyes, my life.

3. the dead are called lost and their families  
hold up shaky printouts in front of us through  
screens smoked up.

we are looking for iris, mother of three. please  
call with any information. we are searching  
for priti, last seen on the 103rd floor. she was  
talking to her husband on the phone and the  
line went. please help us find george, also  
known as adel. his family is waiting for him  
with his favorite meal. i am looking for my son,  
who was delivering coffee. i am looking for my  
sister girl, she started her job on monday. i am  
looking for peace. i am looking for mercy. i am  
looking for evidence of compassion. any evi-  
dence of life. i am looking for life.

4. ricardo on the radio said in his accent thick as  
yuca, "i will feel so much better when the first  
bombs drop over there. and my friends feel the  
same way."

on my block, a woman was crying in a car  
parked and stranded in hurt. i offered com-  
fort, extended a hand she did not see before  
she said, "we're gonna burn them so bad, i  
swear, so bad." my hand went to my head and  
my head went to the numbers within it of the  
dead iraqi children, the dead in nicaragua. the  
dead in rwanda who had to vie with fake sport  
wrestling for america's attention.

yet when people sent emails saying, this was  
bound to happen, lets not forget u.s. trans-  
gressions, for half a second i felt resentful.  
hold up with that, cause i live here, these are  
my friends and fam, and it could have been me  
in those buildings, and we're not bad people,  
do not support america's bullying. can i just  
have a half second to feel bad?

if i can find through this exhaust people who  
were left behind to mourn and to resist mass  
murder, i might be alright.

thank you to the woman who saw me brinking  
my cool and blinking back tears. she opened  
her arms before she asked "do you want a  
hug?" a big white woman, and her embrace  
was the kind only people with the warmth  
of flesh can offer. i wasn't about to say no  
to any comfort. "my brother's in the navy," i

said. "and we're arabs." "wow, you got double  
trouble." word.

5. one more person ask me if i knew the hijack-  
ers. one more motherf\*\*\*\*r ask me what navy  
my brother is in. one more person assume no  
arabs or muslims were killed. one more person  
assume they know me, or that i represent a  
people. or that a people represent an evil. or  
that evil is as simple as a flag and words on a  
page.

we did not vilify all white men when mcveigh  
bombed oklahoma. america did not give out  
his family's addresses or where he went to  
church. or blame the bible or pat robertson.

and when the networks air footage of palestin-  
ians dancing in the street, there is no apology  
that hungry children are bribed with sweets  
that turn their teeth brown. that correspon-  
dents edit images. that archives are there to  
facilitate lazy and inaccurate journalism.

and when we talk about holy books and hooded  
men and death, why do we never mention the  
kkk?

if there are any people on earth who understand  
how new york is feeling right now, they are in  
the west bank and the gaza strip.

6. today it is ten days. last night bush waged war  
on a man once openly funded by the cia. i do  
not know who is responsible. read too many  
books, know too many people to believe what  
i am told. i don't give a f\*\*\* about bin laden.  
his vision of the world does not include me  
or those i love. and petitions have been going  
around for years trying to get the u.s. spon-  
sored taliban out of power. sh\*t is compli-  
cated, and i don't know what to think.

but i know for sure who will pay.

in the world, it will be women, mostly colored  
and poor. women will have to bury children,  
and support themselves through grief. "either  
you are with us, or with the terrorists" mean-  
ing keep your people under control and your  
resistance censored. meaning we got the loot  
and the nukes.

in america, it will be those amongst us who  
refuse blanket attacks on the shivering. those  
of us who work toward social justice, in sup-

port of civil liberties, in opposition to hateful foreign policies.

i have never felt less american and more new yorker, particularly brooklyn, than these past days. the stars and stripes on all these cars and apartment windows represent the dead as citizens first not family members, not lovers.

i feel like my skin is real thin, and that my eyes are only going to get darker. the future holds little light.

my baby brother is a man now, and on alert, and praying five times a day that the orders he will take in a few days time are righteous and will not weigh his soul down from the afterlife he deserves.

both my brothers—my heart stops when i try to pray—not a beat to disturb my fear. one a rock god, the other a sergeant, and both palestinian, practicing muslim, gentle men. both born in brooklyn and their faces are of the archetypal arab man, all eyelashes and nose and beautiful color and stubborn hair.

what will their lives be like now?  
over there is over here.

7. all day, across the river, the smell of burning rubber and limbs floats through. the sirens have stopped now. the advertisers are back on the air. the rescue workers are traumatized. the skyline is brought back to human size. no longer taunting the gods with its height.

i have not cried at all while writing this. i cried when i saw those buildings collapse on themselves like a broken heart. i have never owned pain that needs to spread like that. and i cry daily that my brothers return to our mother safe and whole.

there is no poetry in this. there are causes and effects. there are symbols and ideologies. mad conspiracy here, and information we will never know. there is death here, and there are promises of more.

there is life here. anyone reading this is breathing, maybe hurting, but breathing for sure. and if there is any light to come, it will shine from the eyes of those who look for peace and justice after the rubble and rhetoric are cleared and the phoenix has risen.

affirm life.

affirm life.

we got to carry each other now.

you are either with life, or against it.

affirm life.



Source: Suheir Hammad. "first writing since." In *Zaatar Diva*. New York: Cypher Books, 2005. © 2005 by Suheir Hammad. Used by arrangement with Cypher Books.

**Shabazz, El Hajj Malik** See MALCOLM X.

### Shadhili Sufi Order

The Shadhili Sufi Order began in North Africa in the 13th century. Abu-l-Hasan al-Shadhili, after whom the order is named, was born in the 13th century in modern-day Morocco and buried in Egypt, the country where the order began to take root in the 13th and 14th centuries, specifically under the auspices of Abu-l-'Abbas al-Mursi and Ibn 'Ata' Allah.

The presence of Shadhili Sufism in the United States has been diverse. Like many Sufi orders, the Shadhilis, also known as the Shadhiliyya, have established many branches since first coming to the United States in the early part of the 20th century (according to the earliest known written record) when students of Ahmad al-'Alawi, an Algerian Sufi *shaykh*, or teacher, came to the country.

Originating in what is now Morocco, the Shadhili order spread across the globe, leaving its footprints from Africa to the Arabian Peninsula and the Levant, as well as in South Asia, China, Indonesia, Europe, and North America. There has arguably never been a single unitive element among the various branches, in part due to geographical and cultural diversity. However, according to an American Shadhili *shaykh*, Abdullah Nooruddeen Durkee, one thing that has characterized Shadhilis across time and space is their engagement with society (as opposed to renunciant tendencies) and a focus on gnosis, or personal understanding.

The perhaps best-known expression of the Shadhiliyya in the United States has been the MARYAMIYYA, which was headed by FRITHJOF SCHUON until his death in 1998. Privately known as Sheikh 'Isa Nur al-Din, he was originally from Switzerland and moved to Bloomington, Indiana, in the 1970s. Schuon first came to the United States in 1959, and in terms of available evidence, he was one of the first transmitters, if not the first, of Shadhili Sufism in the United States. However, since records have not necessarily existed

documenting the presence of Shadhili Sufism in the United States, the dates of such origins can only be speculative. There could very well have been a presence since the arrival of African Muslim slaves in the 17th century.

Schuon was initiated into the Shadhiliyya-ʿAlawiyya Sufi order of Algeria via Ahmad al-ʿAlawi, and soon after studying with him, Schuon had visionary inspiration to connect with Mary and Jesus in his spiritual practices. Since that time his movement has been known as the Maryamiyya. Schuon was also connected with the perennialist/traditionalist school of philosophy, which holds that despite their external difference all religions share an inner core of spiritual and ethical values. Schuon was also an intellectual descendent of René Guénon, another European intellectual who was associated with the Shadhiliyya. While the practices of the Maryamiyya order have been Islamic in nature, they have also incorporated Christian, Hindu, and Native American practices and terminology.

Schuon did not lecture publicly, though he published many written works. His legacy has also been perpetuated by the Muslim-American professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr, who has published several books about Schuon. Other prominent scholars of Islam, such as Titus Burckhardt and Martin Lings, have also been associated with Schuon's teachings. Lings wrote a seminal work on Ahmad al-ʿAlawi in 1961, entitled *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century*.

The Darqawiyya-Habibiyya, another branch of the Shadhiliyya, was formed in 1976 by ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Murabit, formerly known as Ian Dallas. A British author and actor, he was initiated by Moroccan Sufi Sheikh Muhammad ibn al-Habib al-Darqawi in 1967, and by the middle 1970s, he had established a Sufi community in Norwich, England. He first brought the movement to the United States in 1973, and his followers established a center in Berkeley, California, in 1977. The order spread to other countries, notably Spain, and domestically his community spread from Berkeley to Southern California and North Carolina. ʿAbd al-Qadir most notably influenced the famous American sheikh, Hamza Yusuf.

Sheikh Fadhlalla Haeri, an Iraqi engineer and a SHRʿA MUSLIM AMERICAN who had been affiliated with the Habibiyya during the 1970s established a Sufi community in Blanco, Texas, near San Antonio in 1980. By the late 1980s, Haeri had relocated to England and eventually settled in South Africa. He started the magazine *Nuradeen* and has authored many books. Gray Henry, founder of Fons Vitae, a publishing house for books on Islamic spirituality, was also initiated into a Shadhili order. Fons Vitae has published many important translations of Shadhili texts—perhaps most notably *The Hikm* of Ibn ʿAtaʾ Allah. Another American branch of the Shadhiliyya, the Burhaniyya, was founded by Sheikh Mohamed ʿUthman. Its centers spread to NEW YORK CITY and Montreal.

Muhammad al-Jamal, a Palestinian Shadhili *shaykh* from Jerusalem first started visiting the United States in 1992. Since that time he has visited at least once a year. By 1995, he had initiated approximately 300 students, and according to records from the Shadhiliyya Sufi Center of Northern California, 1,953 people had been formally initiated as of March 2008. Students of al-Jamal have often been introduced to his message through the work of Robert Ibrahim Jaffe, a medical doctor and one of al-Jamal's first students in the United States. In 2005, Jaffe founded the University of Spiritual Healing and Sufism (USHS), which meets quarterly and trains students in spiritual healing, all the while incorporating Sufi-Islamic practices, and the vast majority of the school's students have been initiated into al-Jamal's branch of the Shadhiliyya. USHS was previously known as the Jaffe Institute of Spiritual and Medical Healing (founded in 2000) and, before that, the School of Energy Mastery (founded in 1991).

Abdullah Nooruddeen Durkee, founder of the Green Mountain School and of the Noor Educational Foundation and translator of the *Tajwidi Qurʾan*, has also contributed to a significant Shadhiliyya presence in the United States and has shared ties with al-Jamal's community. A convert and spiritual representative of his Egyptian Shadhili teacher, Ibrahim al-Battawi, Durkee has worked closely with the community of Muhammad al-Jamal for the past several years, teaching al-Jamal's students ARABIC, the QURʾAN, and about the historical development of the order. Although a native to the United States, Durkee spent several years in Egypt studying and teaching Sufism before returning to the United States in the late 1970s, eventually settling in Virginia. In addition to writing a number of published pamphlets, he also translated from Arabic into English *The School of the Shadhdhuliyyah*, a work by Abdu-l-Halim Mahmud, a former rector at al-Azhar University during the 20th century.

Nuh Keller, an American convert and Shadhili *shaykh*, has also established a significant community in the United States and has remained involved with Islamic learning institutions in the country, such as Sunni Path. Though he has lived in Amman, Jordan, for several years, many of his students have remained in the United States. In 1991, he translated *The Reliance of the Traveller*, a manual of Islamic law by the 14th-century author Ahmad ibn Naqib al-Misri.

American expressions of Sufism, in general, have often emphasized universal qualities of God and religion, making Sufism attractive to many Americans who consider themselves "spiritual but not religious." Mainstream expressions of Sufism, throughout history, have fallen in line with Sunni Islamic teachings and have simultaneously demonstrated a malleability and emphasis on inner dimensions of worship. This tendency has become magnified in American expres-

sions of Sufism—among them the Shadhiliyya—and in this way they have reflected a new wave in the evolution of Sufism.

Elliott Bazzano

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### Shakir, Zaid (1956– ) religious scholar

The life of African-American Muslim religious scholar Zaid Shakir is a story of a person who grew up in federal housing projects and went on to become a leading scholar of Islam in the United States.

Born on May 24, 1956, in Berkeley, California, Zaid Shakir was the second of seven children. When he was young, his mother and father separated, and his mother moved the family to Carver Homes in southwest ATLANTA, GEORGIA. He moved again around the time he was in fourth grade to Pinnacle Heights, another housing project, in New Britain, Connecticut. Shakir was influenced during his childhood most deeply by his mother, a woman who, while having to rely on welfare to raise her children, wrote and published criticisms of white colonialism and imperialism in the *New Britain Herald* and *Hartford Courant*.

Growing up in the projects, Shakir witnessed police brutality toward blacks and Hispanics and was also dismayed by the illegal drug use, alcoholism, and broken homes in his neighborhood. Playing football and running track provided him a refuge, though a shoulder injury kept him from pursuing his love for sports. He felt little connection to the Baptist church in which his mother had raised him. He became an atheist.

In January 1975, as a first-year student at Connecticut State University, Shakir was influenced by the struggle for black liberation and especially its leftist critiques of Christianity as a religion that oppressed black people. But constant questioning of materialism and his mother's death in the spring of 1975 led him to reconsider his stance on God. He felt an urge to connect with some form of spirituality.

After dropping out of college later in 1975, however, Shakir became homeless. Out of desperation, he enlisted in the UNITED STATES MILITARY in 1976. First experimenting with transcendental meditation, which he found unsatisfying, he read a book on Islam by Egyptian author Hammouda Abdul Ati. In 1977, Shakir converted to Islam at a mosque associated with Sunni Muslim-American leader W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008).

After finishing his enlistment in the U.S. Air Force, he enrolled in the American University in Washington, D.C., where he earned a B.A. in international relations in 1983. In 1986, he received a master's in political science from Rutgers University, leaving after his graduation to study ARABIC in Cairo, Egypt, for a year.

In 1987, Shakir became an adjunct professor in political science at Southern Connecticut State University and served as imam, or religious leader, of a mosque in New Haven. Masjid al-Islam, the mosque of Islam, was socially active, campaigning against drug dealers in New Haven and supporting New York leader Siraj Wahhaj's efforts to shut down crack houses in Brooklyn. Shakir's followers also patrolled housing projects in New Haven. But Shakir was not satisfied with his knowledge of Islam and decided to deepen it by leaving to study Islam in Syria.

In 1994, Shakir commenced an intensive seven-year study of the QUR'AN, SHARI'AH, or Islamic LAW and ethics, and other religious subjects. Graduating from the Islamic studies program at Damascus's Abu Noor University in 2001, Shakir returned to Connecticut, where he resumed his duties as imam of Masjid al-Islam.

In 2003, he was invited by the ZAYTUNA INSTITUTE to become a lecturer and scholar-in-residence at a new Islamic studies center led by HAMZA YUSUF in Hayward, California. In 2005, he published his first book of essays, *Scattered Pictures*. Shakir also emerged as a popular guest speaker both on college campuses and among Muslim-American audiences across the country, where he applied his vast knowledge of Islamic studies to a wide range of contemporary issues from terrorism and U.S. foreign policy to gender equality and poverty.

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### shari'a

Shari'a, or Islamic LAW and ethics, is not codified, and Muslims in the United States have held often widely divergent views about how shari'a is to be interpreted and its proper role in daily life. Based primarily on the QUR'AN and supplemented as necessary by the example, or Sunna, of the prophet Muhammad during his lifetime, shari'a is a human attempt to interpret the Divine Will in all aspects of life. As such, shari'a offers a complete guide for living that goes well beyond strictly legal doctrines to encompass even mundane aspects of everyday life, including religious worship, business relations, ethics and manners, and belief.

Although theoretically the shari'a applies to all Muslims, regardless of when or where they may live, as a practical matter, the degree to which individuals have wanted to or been able to live in strict accordance with the shari'a has varied considerably. This has been the case throughout the world, but has been especially true in the United States, where Muslims have been a religious minority and have often had to struggle to maintain their beliefs and practices, including the observance of shari'a.

#### AFRICAN MUSLIMS IN AMERICA

The first Muslims to reach the shores of North America in significant numbers were those kidnapped from their homes in West Africa and sold into slavery from the 17th through the 19th centuries. The brutal realities of life in slavery placed these enslaved Muslims at the mercy of a new law, one that reduced them to chattel and severely restricted the ability of even the most dedicated to observe even the basics of shari'a. (This is graphically illustrated in the 1997 movie *Amistad*, which shows a group of slaves attempting to perform one of the five daily prayers while chained together on board the slave ship.) Once they reached the shores of North America, Muslim slaves faced the additional hardship of being sold off and separated from their coreligionists. Isolated from each other and subjugated to the will of their masters within a society that deemed Islam a pagan religion, most Muslim slaves faced a lonely struggle to maintain their faith and religious practices.

Yet anecdotal evidence indicates that at least some Muslim slaves attempted to observe the shari'a as faithfully as their situations would allow. Salih Bilali, for example, a slave on a plantation in St. Simon's Island in Georgia, was described by his owner in the early 19th century as a "strict Mahometan; [he] abstains from spirituous liquors, and keeps various fasts, particularly that of the Rhamadan." Salih's friend and contemporary, Bilali Mohamed, who worked on a plantation in nearby Sapelo Island, had been trained in Islamic law back in Africa and was noted for praying five times a day facing east, fasting during the month of Ramadan, and celebrating the two major Islamic holi-

days (see BILALI OF SAPELO ISLAND). He was the author of a 13-page Arabic text, currently housed at the University of Georgia Library, based on a West African legal treatise from the Maliki school of Islamic jurisprudence and setting out the rules for ritual ablution and prayer.

Bilali Mohamed was considered the imam, or leader, of Sapelo Island's Muslim slave community, and the unusually large numbers of Muslims in close proximity to each other, combined with the island's geographic isolation, enabled at least some aspects of Islamic belief and practice to be passed on to future generations. One of his modern-day descendants, Cornelia Walker Bailey (a likely corruption of the original "Bilali"), has described being taught as a child to say her prayers facing the east, unknowingly following the Muslim practice of facing the holy city of Mecca to pray.

For most Muslim slaves, however, the need to survive had to take precedence over their desire to observe the shari'a. Unable to obtain HALAL, or permissible, foods, for example, even a devout Muslim would eat otherwise *haram*, or forbidden, food such as pork, knowing that the shari'a required them to eat what was available in order to survive. A slave whose owner refused to allow him or her to perform the five-times-daily prayer ritual might combine prayers and perform them in secret. While the shari'a is flexible enough to allow for such accommodations when necessary, slave owners' generally open hostility to Islamic practices and efforts to convert slaves to Christianity, as well the loss of any connection with the rest of the Muslim world, meant that for most slaves any knowledge of shari'a or its requirements generally disappeared within a generation or two.

#### EARLY IMMIGRANTS

Beginning in 1875, new groups of Muslims began to arrive in the United States as immigrants in search of economic opportunity. These new arrivals hailed mostly from the Middle East (Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine) and Eastern Europe (Albania, Russia, Poland, and other countries) and found work as factory workers, farmers, itinerant peddlers, or small shopkeepers. Many of these new immigrants had little opportunity—or desire—to live according to the shari'a and assimilated into mainstream American society. Others held on to some shari'a practices but not others, for example eschewing pork but not worrying whether other meat was halal. The experience described by the son of Fazel Khan, who immigrated to Boston from present-day Pakistan in 1912, was in many ways typical: "[My father] married Mabel Smith, a devout Methodist. We were Americans . . . but we listened to Pakistani folk tunes, played on a flute, [and] learned Muslim prayers. . . . In our family life, East not only met but lived in reasonably good terms with West. . . . We children attended a Methodist church with our mother.

My father, who could find neither a mosque nor a Muslim community in Boston, prayed alone on his [prayer] rug every Friday evening."

Sometimes, however, larger groups of immigrants from the same part of the Muslim world formed communities where they could better maintain their cultural and religious practices. The heart of many such communities was the local mosque. As early as 1915, Muslim immigrants from Albania working in the local mills may have used the Peppermell Counting House in Biddeford, Maine, as a mosque; one of the oldest mosques in the United States built for that purpose was constructed in 1929 by immigrant Syrian farmers living in Ross, NORTH DAKOTA. Although the five daily prayers could be performed privately in any space that was ritually clean, the mosques provided early immigrant Muslims and their descendants a space in which to conduct the weekly congregational, or *juma*, prayer required every Friday. HOLIDAY observances, including the monthlong fast of Ramadan, were also important. So many Syrian Muslims worked at the Pullman car factory in Michigan City that when they celebrated Eid al-Fitr at the end of Ramadan, it had to close down.

Few of these early Muslim immigrants had had formal religious education before coming to the United States, and although many were keen to pass on their religious values to their children and grandchildren, they often made little distinction between shari'a-based practices and those that were based on a cultural norm. In addition, the geographic separation of these ethnic immigrant communities from one another and the rest of the Muslim world, combined with the lack of trained religious leaders, made it difficult to observe the shari'a as a complete way of life. Individual Muslims found their own ways of adapting to the challenge of living as a religious minority in a non-Muslim society. For many, this meant living their lives according to what they felt were the basic principles of Islam, including justice, respect, honesty, and dignity, rather than specific religious laws derived from shari'a.

#### MID-TWENTIETH-CENTURY MOVEMENTS AND MISSIONARIES

The influx of new Muslim immigrants slowed to a trickle with the passage of the Immigration Acts of 1917 and 1924, which explicitly barred almost all immigrants from Asia and set up a quota system that severely restricted immigration from the Middle East. Around this same time, however, a number of Islamic movements arose in the African-American community. Although the beliefs and practices of some of these diverged from traditional Islamic doctrines, they often adapted some shari'a practices. The MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, for example, taught its members to pray three times a day facing the east. And ELIJAH MUHAMMAD,

the leader of NATION OF ISLAM, instructed his followers to pray in a traditionally Sunni manner and adopted dietary restrictions on pork and alcohol, but interpreted the meaning of these practices through his own black nationalist form of Islam.

Although generally considered a heretical sect because of its belief that another prophet followed the prophet MUHAMMAD, the Ahmadi movement did much to introduce more mainstream forms of Islam in the United States, especially among African Americans, and to demonstrate how shari'a could often harmonize with U.S. law. When immigration officials sought to bar entry to Muhammad Sadiq, an Ahmadiyya missionary who sailed from England to the United States in 1920, on the grounds that he was a "representative of a religious group that practiced polygamy," he responded, "I have not come here to teach plurality of wives. If a Moslem will ever preach or practice polygamy in America he will be committing a sin against his religion." Sadiq based his argument on a distinction between what is required by shari'a and what is permitted, maintaining that Muslims must avoid practices, such as polygamy, that are merely permitted—but not required—by shari'a when they contradict the law of the country in which they live.

Another missionary group was the Islamic Mission of America, founded by Sheikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal, which sought to propagate Sunni Islam. Muslims affiliated with his organization fasted during Ramadan, prayed five times daily, and endeavored to make the hajj pilgrimage. In 1962, a group of African Americans who had been attending the Islamic Mission's State Street Mosque in New York became dissatisfied with Sheikh Daoud, in part because they felt he was too interested in "being accepted by America" and unwilling to challenge the status quo. In response, they created the Darul-Islam movement, seeking to create a community of Muslims dedicated to an Islamic lifestyle according to what they considered to be an orthodox Sunni interpretation of shari'a, and in 1963 a group of 40 to 50 men signed the following *ba'yah*, or pledge: "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful; Allah is the Greatest; Bearing witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad (peace be on him) is His Messenger, and being a follower of the last Prophet and Messenger of Allah, I hereby pledge myself to the Shariah and to those who are joined by this pledge." Differences in interpretation of the shari'a led to friction within the movement, however. One key point of contention was in the proper understanding of the shari'a prohibition against intoxicants. Some members argued that they could continue to smoke marijuana because it was not mentioned specifically in the Qur'an, or that differences in the Qur'anic passages on intoxicants meant that they had the right to withdraw gradually from drinking alcoholic beverages, as the first Muslims did.

### EFFECT OF 1960s IMMIGRATION REFORM

The number and diversity of Muslim Americans dramatically increased following the passage of the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 amendments, which did away with the 1924 act's national-origin quota system that had disproportionately favored European immigration. As the number of Muslim immigrants from all parts of the world began to increase, the interaction of these new arrivals and their American-born children with indigenous Muslims and converts created many new challenges, as well as new opportunities to facilitate shari'a observance.

Many of the immigrants who arrived in the United States after 1965 and their descendants, much like previous generations, quickly adopted lifestyles that were not substantially different from mainstream America. This did not necessarily mean, however, that they renounced their Muslim identity or rejected shari'a totally. Some accepted shari'a in principle but would often choose not to observe aspects of it that they found inconvenient or that might attract negative attention. For example, one Muslim immigrant in the 1980s Midwest who owned and operated liquor stores and bars for 20 years observed, "Myself, I know as a Muslim we are not supposed to serve or drink or be in the bar business. A Muslim shouldn't do those things. But I never stopped to think I shouldn't do that when I was working." Other liquor store owners maintained that shari'a allowed them to sell liquor so long as their customers were non-Muslims. Women often avoided wearing Islamic clothing such as long skirts and head coverings in public because people stared at them. Still other Muslims lived according to their personal understanding of shari'a, such as a young American-born woman who stated, "Now I think women who go to the mosque to pray should be covered. . . . But how women dress outside of the mosque is their own private business. I don't want to go to college with my head covered, and wearing a short skirt does not make me a bad Muslim."

Yet even Muslims who sought to follow shari'a rigorously in all aspects of their lives faced a host of challenges and were often forced to make compromises. When halal meat was not available, Muslims would often buy kosher meat from a Jewish butcher or delicatessen, or they would buy non-halal meat so long as it was not pork. Work and school schedules often made it difficult to perform the five daily prayers at their prescribed times or to attend the Friday congregational prayer. Because prayer requires a thorough ritual ablution, which includes washing the face, hands, and feet, and a clean area without pictures or other adornments on the wall, many employers and schools simply did not have proper facilities to accommodate prayers. Often Muslims were hesitant to even ask for such accommodations or for time off to attend Friday prayers at a mosque or Islamic center, fearing that by doing so they might jeopardize their jobs or create friction with their non-Muslim coworkers.

Financial dealings also posed a challenge to Muslims because of the shari'a's prohibition against *riba*, or interest. While some Muslims interpreted this as prohibiting only usury, or the lending of money at an exorbitant rate of interest, others understood it as a complete bar against the paying or earning of interest. Muslims who followed a stricter interpretation were therefore faced with a dilemma. For example, as one Muslim businessman observed: "We know that Allah said that interest is *haram* and that we should not partake in that, but we are in a country whereby if we don't, then the Muslims will be left behind. So many times we have Muslims who are trying to buy a home, trying to get into business, trying to compete with the business man in this country. Often times we do have to take loans and we do have to pay interest on them. I don't believe Allah will hold that against us. We are not the one making the interest on that loan."

### ACCOMMODATING SHARI'A IN AMERICAN LIFE

By the beginning of the 21st century, the growth of the Muslim-American community had begun to make it easier for those Muslims who wished to follow shari'a to do so in nearly every aspect of their lives. Employers and schools increasingly began to make accommodations for Muslims' prayers, arranging work schedules to allow for prayer time, or permitting students to pray during noninstructional time. Public venues used by large numbers of Muslims, such as universities and airports, sometimes added foot-washing facilities in restrooms for health and safety reasons.

Muslims who fasted during Ramadan became increasingly visible and accepted. Schools often allowed fasting students to spend their lunch period in the library rather than having to sit in the cafeteria while their classmates ate. When possible, student and professional athletes adjusted their schedules to accommodate the rigors of fasting. When that was not possible, many continued to fast anyway. In October 2007, even though most of their players had spent the last three weeks abstaining from food or drink all day due to the fast, Michigan's Fordson High School football team chalked up their first win during Ramadan, beating crosstown rival Dearborn High 16-14. "No Excuses" read the special T-shirts worn by the team's fans and team assistants at the game.

To facilitate the observance of shari'a dietary requirements, organizations such as the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America began to develop halal certification programs, allowing manufacturers to affix special symbols on packages to indicate that none of a product's ingredients and preparation were *haram*, or forbidden. In addition, some states began to pass truth-in-advertising laws that would allow them to levy fines against vendors caught falsely labeling products as halal, similar to laws designed to protect consumers from falsely labeled kosher products. It also became

easier for Muslims to engage in "shari'a compliant" financial dealings, with a growing number of banks and mutual funds such as HSBC Amanah and Guidance Financial Group advertising mortgages and investment options specially designed to avoid *riba*, or interest, or investment in companies involved in liquor, pornography, gambling, or other activities considered *haram*, or forbidden, under shari'a.

An increasing number of Muslim communities began to establish their own cemeteries to ensure that burial services could be conducted in accordance with shari'a, which requires that the body be washed, shrouded, and buried within 24 hours of death. The body would be placed in the grave without a coffin, where local law permitted, on his or her right side, facing Mecca. Muslims who wished to bypass state inheritance laws and follow the elaborate shari'a rules of inheritance could easily do so by writing a will to that effect.

It was important to many Muslims to follow the shari'a when it came to questions of marriage, divorce, or custody arrangements, although most generally did so within the framework of U.S. law. Couples getting married frequently drew up a marriage contract specifying the dowry, known as *mahr* or *sadaq*, that the shari'a required the groom to give as a gift to the bride. The type or amount of dowry varied according to custom or the wishes of the party, ranging from a token amount to large sums of money. Muslim women increasingly began to use these marriage contracts as a way to ensure their rights, adding terms that would allow them to continue their education or work outside the home, or to initiate a divorce. While the vast majority of Muslim marriages in America, like in the rest of the world, were monogamous, a small number of Muslim men did marry more than one wife as allowed by shari'a. While religiously valid under shari'a, these marriages were not recognized by U.S. law.

When Muslim Americans had questions about the shari'a and how to apply it in their own lives and within their communities, they increasingly turned away from "imported" muftis, or religious authorities, and toward home-grown scholars, trained in Islamic law but born or raised in the United States, who could better understand the realities Muslim Americans faced as a religious minority. For example, in 2006, the Fiqh Council of North America, which is made up of scholars who have at least five years of residence in North America, issued a decision to use astronomical calculations to determine the start of Ramadan and the dates of Muslim holidays rather than moon sightings traditionally used. One basis for this change was to avoid the "hardship, chaos and confusion" that often resulted when the U.S. community relied on moon sightings by scholars in foreign countries, which made the start date unpredictable and often led to different Muslim groups within the United States—sometimes in the same city—celebrating on differ-

ent days. In addition, the Fiqh Council's methodology was mindful of the status of Muslims as a religious minority for whom advanced notice of Islamic dates would make it easier to request time off from work or school, or to have their holidays officially recognized.

Organizations such as the Fiqh Council or local scholars, known as muftis, also delivered fatwas, or religious rulings, responding to questions related to shari'a and its interpretation and practical application in the United States. In addition, individuals and communities increasingly began to use mediation and arbitration services available through the Fiqh Council or local mosques and Islamic centers to resolve disputes and disagreements according to shari'a principles. However, while the growing size of the U.S. Muslim population afforded Muslims with expanded opportunities to observe shari'a more completely than ever, individual decisions on its correct interpretation and what—if any—aspects of shari'a to follow continued to reflect the immense diversity among Muslims in the United States.

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### Azizah al-Hibri on the Islamic Legal Rights of Married Women (2002)

*Azizah al-Hibri (1943– ), a Lebanese-American law and philosophy professor at the University of Richmond, has published more than 30 books and articles in addition to leading the charge for Muslim women's legal rights both in the United States and abroad. The founder of Karamah, Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights, al-Hibri has attempted to convince non-Muslim and Muslim Americans that the shari'a, or Islamic law and ethics, can be a basis for (rather than an impediment to) the struggle for women's equality. Some Muslim Americans and Muslims abroad find her interpretations of the shari'a to be too liberal, though many Muslims, whether liberal or conservative, agree with her interpretations of the rights of married women explained below.*



#### Marriage Relations in Islam

Historically, marriage has been an institution that favored men over women. Through this institution, basic women's rights such as the right to education, financial independence, and freedom of self-fulfillment were usually denied. A fulfilled woman was, in fact, viewed as one who married, served her husband well, and bore him children. This view, although less common today, continues to exist both in the West and in Muslim countries. Yet it is in total contradiction to the Islamic view of women and marriage.

Islam guarantees for women, among other things, the right to an education similar to that of the male, the right to financial independence, and even the right to engage in *ijtihad* [independent legal reasoning]. Islam also views marriage as an institution in which human beings find tranquility

and affection with each other. It is for this reason that some prominent traditional Muslim scholars have argued that a woman is not required to serve her husband, prepare his food, or clean his house. In fact, the husband is obligated to bring his wife prepared food, for example. This assertion is based on the recognition that the Muslim wife is a companion to her husband and not a maid. Many jurists also defined the purpose of marriage institution in terms of sexual enjoyment (as distinguished from reproduction). They clearly stated that a Muslim woman has a right to sexual enjoyment within the marriage. This view has important consequences in areas such as contraception and divorce.

It is these rights and views, which are derived from the Qur'an and classical *ijtihad*, that we must actively reclaim. . . . So long as patriarchal (hierarchical/authoritarian) logic prevails, Muslim women will be denied their God-given rights. Qur'anic concepts of family relations must be more adequately recognized and enforced in Muslim countries and communities to abolish the authoritarian structure of the marriage institution.

In striving for this result we must recognize the fact that patriarchal logic is deeply entrenched in all societies and is quite resistant to being uprooted. If we, however, follow the Qur'anic approach to change, we will receive the support of many Muslim men and achieve a great measure of success without sacrificing the social cohesion of Muslim communities.

In fostering change the Qur'an resorts to what has been known recently in the West as affirmative action. In a patriarchal society even a general declaration of equal rights is not sufficient to protect women. Consequently, divine wisdom gave women further protections. Paramount among these protections is the ability of the Muslim woman to negotiate her marriage contract and place in it any conditions that do not contradict its purpose. For example, she could place in her marriage contract a condition forbidding her husband from moving her away from her own city or town. She could also insert a condition requiring him to support her in the pursuit of her education after marriage. She could also use the marriage contract to ensure that her marriage would foster, rather than destroy, her financial independence. This goal is usually achieved by requiring a substantial *mahr* [the dower].

### The Mahr Requirement

Despite many patriarchal and Orientalist [stereotypical] interpretations that have distorted and even damaged the Muslim woman's rights in this area, the law of *mahr* was made clear quite early. The *mahr* is a requirement imposed by God upon men entering marriage as a sign of their serious commitment and a gesture of goodwill, a matter of great concern to women living in this patriarchal world. In fact, the giving of *mahr* is not much different from the Western custom of giving an engagement ring to signal commitment. Islamic law, however, preserved for the prospective wife the right to specify to her prospective husband the type of *mahr* she prefers. One woman may prefer cash, another property, depending on her relative needs or even taste. A third woman may choose something intangible (nonmaterial) as her *mahr*, such as education. That is acceptable also. A woman of meager means may prefer to ask for capital that she could immediately invest in a business. In fact, she could even use that capital to start her own business. Her husband would have no access to either the capital or income from that business even if he were in need because legally, her *mahr* belongs to her alone. . . .

*Mahr*, therefore, is not a "bride price" as some have erroneously described it. It is not money the woman pays to obtain a husband nor money [that] the husband pays to obtain a wife. It is part of a civil contract that specifies the conditions under which a woman is willing to abandon her status as a single woman and its related opportunities in order to marry a prospective husband and start a family. Consequently, as in Western prenuptial and nuptial agreements, the contract addresses matters of concern to the prospective wife and provides her with financial and other assurances. In short, it is a vehicle for ensuring the continued well-being of women entering matrimonial life in a world of patriarchal injustice and inequality. . . .

### Family Planning

Another measure for guarding the interests of women in particular and the Muslim community in general is provided in the area of family planning. Islam values the family structure and, like Judaism and Christianity, encourages procreation. Islamic law, nevertheless, differs from both traditions in its liberal approach to family planning.

It shares with some Judeo-Christian traditions the view that contraception is permissible. Coitus interruptus (*al-'azl*) was practiced by members of the Muslim community during the time of Prophet Muhammad. Indeed, the Prophet knew that some of his companions, including his cousin Ali, practiced it, yet he did not prohibit it.

Al-Ghazali, a prominent fifteenth-century jurist, argues that contraception is always permitted. He makes an analogy between intercourse and a contract. A contract consists of an offer and acceptance. So long as the offer has not been accepted, he notes, it can be withdrawn. He even suggests that a woman can engage in contraception to preserve her beauty but adds that it is disliked (*makrouh*) if used to avoid female offspring. Jurists have, however, conditioned the practice of *al-'azl* upon the consent of the wife. Some even argue that if the husband practices *al-'azl* without the wife's permission, he has to pay her a fine because he has detracted from her sexual enjoyment, her established right.

Until recently, the majority of traditional jurists have taken a relatively liberal view toward abortion that properly balances the rights of the mother and the rights of the child. They recognized a period of early pregnancy that could be terminated at will and a subsequent period in which the embryo became ensouled. The jurists argued that when the embryo became ensouled, increasingly stringent criteria should be used to justify abortion (such as the health of the mother). More recently, relying on medical data, jurists have adopted the view that the embryo is ensouled soon after conception. It is desirable that Muslim women physicians and jurists reexamine this recent conclusion to determine its validity.

### Maintenance

Classical Islamic jurisprudence entitles the woman to maintenance by her husband. Even if fully financially independent, she is not required to spend any of her money except as she wishes. Furthermore, the wife is under no duty to do any housework although she may engage in such work on a volunteer basis. Some traditional jurists suggested that the wife was entitled to monetary compensation for her volunteer housework activity.

The law of maintenance is based on the Qur'an, but unfortunately it has been used to assert the general superiority of men over women. The

relevant Qur'anic verse simply states that men may gain *qiwamah* (advisory, caretaking status) vis-à-vis women if only they satisfy two preconditions.

First, the male must be the (financial) maintainer of the woman. In other words, if he is not carrying her financial responsibility, then he has no standing to interfere in her affairs by providing unsolicited advice. Second, the male must also possess qualities (such as financial acumen, real estate expertise, etc.) that the advised woman needs to reach a particular decision but lacks (at that point). Without these two qualifications (which, incidentally, may change from time to time and from one decision to another), men may not even presume to provide advice or be caretakers (*qawwamun*).

Because the Qur'an was revealed in a world that was and continues to be highly patriarchal, it engaged in affirmative action to protect women. The revelation about maintenance provided women against poverty. It also made clear that maintenance alone does not suffice for a man to claim *qiwamah* over a woman. . . .

Despite all the rights and guarantees offered by Islam to women, most men still use women as uncompensated laborers in their households. Furthermore, they not only expect them to produce heirs but also to nurse these heirs. . . . Yet most Muslim jurists do not require Muslim women to nurse their children except to save the life of the child. Instead, the husband is required to hire a wet nurse (or buy milk formula) if the mother does not want to nurse. If the husband divorces the wife, and she nurses the child after the divorce, jurists agree that she is entitled to monetary compensation for that nursing. Hence, while masquerading as Islamic family law, a significant amount of the present family law in Muslim countries is influenced by local custom and patriarchal tradition.

### Polygyny

Western writers have treated polygyny as one of the most controversial Islamic practices. Thus, it may be surprising to discover that Qur'anic reasoning clearly favors monogamy. The major Qur'anic verses at issue are two. One *ayah* [verse] states: "If you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; But if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them),

then only one or that which your right hand possesses. That will be more suitable to prevent you from doing injustice." The other *ayah* states that men cannot deal justly with their wives when they marry more than one woman [4:129].

Some Muslim jurists have interpreted the first *ayah* to mean that a man has the right to marry up to four wives as long as he is equally just with each of them. In providing this interpretation, these jurists ignored the first part of the *ayah* which conditions the permission upon a certain context that obtained at the time of its revelation, namely, one of justice and fairness concerning the treatment of orphaned wives. Secondly, these jurists ignored that last part of the *ayah*, which states that (even in that context) justice considerations make it preferable to marry only one wife. Consequently, this highly conditional and fact-specific verse was interpreted as if it articulated a general rule. Of the two conditions, the first was ignored altogether, whereas the second was reduced to the duty of exercising fairness in treatment and maintenance among the wives. These same jurists also ignored the second *ayah*, which flatly states that men are incapable of satisfying the condition precedent for engaging in polygyny, namely, justice and fairness.

Other traditional jurists, however, concluded that the Qur'an is clear in advocating monogamy as the general rule. They also added that insofar as polygyny causes the first wife harm, it is forbidden altogether (*haram*). Several traditional jurists also recognized the right of the woman to place in the marriage contract a condition barring the prospective husband from additional (polygynous) marriages.

Yet practices of polygyny continue in some Muslim societies as a sign of economic or sexual power. As such, they are similar to the Western practice of having concubines or extramarital lovers. It is part of patriarchal custom and not religion. But religious scholars who attempt to criticize the practice or change the law are criticized for succumbing to Western influences.

Western neoorientalist critiques of Islam, thinly disguised as "feminist" critiques, have managed only to complicate the task of Muslim women. These critiques tend to be motivated more by a feeling of superiority and a desire for cultural hegemony than by a desire to help the female "Other" (in this case, the Muslim woman). The neoorientalist attitude is evidenced by the fact

that only negative and distorted stereotypes of Muslim women are propagated in international fora. Furthermore, these Western “liberators” have taken it upon themselves to “explain” Islam, criticize the Qur'an, and redefine and prioritize the demands of Muslim women over these women's objections. This attack on Islam by unqualified biased commentators offends the religious sensibilities of all Muslims, male and female, regardless of their points of view.

Significantly, while Muslim women struggled repeatedly in international fora to raise basic issues of survival and development, such as hunger, water, war, and disease, patriarchal Western women have insisted on making the veil, clitoridec-tomy, and polygyny their primary preoccupations instead. They have even selected and funded some secular “Muslim” women to act as spokeswomen for the rest of the Muslim women. Needless to say, this neoorientalist attack on Islam has adversely impacted the civil rights of Muslims in Western countries and has poisoned the well for Muslim women seeking to regain their God-given Islamic rights in their own societies. Unfortunately, this state of affairs has alienated many Muslim women from the Western feminist movement.



Source: Azizah al-Hibri. “An Introduction to Muslim Women's Rights.” In *Windows of Faith: Muslim Women Scholar-Activists in North America*, edited by Gisela Webb, 57–60, 62–68. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2002.

## Shi'a Muslim Americans

The term Shi'a refers to the partisans of Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of MUHAMMAD. After the Prophet died in 632 C.E., the early Shi'a claimed that Ali, the cousin and son-in law of the Prophet, was the only legitimate successor to the prophet Muhammad. They also believed that only family members of the Prophet, the *ahl al-bayt*, were qualified to lead the Muslim community after him. These leaders were called imams, and all of them were descendants of the Prophet from the line of Ali and Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet. The Shi'as believed that the rights of Ali and the family of the Prophet were usurped by the companions of Muhammad. This meant that, from the very beginning, Shi'a Islam rose as a dissenting group in opposition to the Muslim majority.

With the coming of Ali to power in 656, Shi'ism emerged as an effective religious movement. The massacre of Husayn, the son of Ali, and his forces at Karbala during his uprising

against the Caliph Yazid in 681 was an important milestone in Shi'a history, as it affirmed notions of injustices endured by the progeny of the Prophet and exacerbated a passion for martyrdom.

Shi'a theology and jurisprudence took definitive shape in the times of the fifth and sixth imams, Muhammad al-Baqir, who died in the 730s, and Ja'far al-Sadiq, who died in 765. The latter, in particular, was largely responsible for the construction of a Shi'a legal edifice and the formulation of the Shi'a doctrine of the imamate. The true imam, al-Sadiq stated, had to be divinely appointed. The imam was also believed to be infallible and was empowered to provide authoritative interpretation of Islamic revelation. Designation and infallibility were complemented by the imam's possession of special knowledge that was either transmitted from the Prophet or derived from inherited scrolls. It was this notion of the divinely inspired and charismatic leadership of the imams that distinguished Shi'ism from the majority Sunnis.

Three major Shi'a groups, the Twelver Shi'a, the Nizari, and the Bohra Isma'ili communities, compose the Shi'a Muslim American population. The Nizari and the Bohra Isma'ilis branched off from the mainstream Shi'a community after the death of the sixth Shi'a imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq, proclaiming his son Isma'il to be his successor. The majority of the Shi'as maintained that al-Sadiq had appointed another son, Musa al-Kazim, to succeed him.

In 1094, when the eighth Fatimid caliph, al-Muntanhir, died, there was a dispute regarding his successor. The Isma'ilis became divided into the Musta'li (now called Bohra) and Nizari (now called Aga Khani) groups. Most of the Nizari Isma'ilis in America arrived since the 1970s. A highly organized and disciplined community, under the guidance of their spiritual leader, the AGA KHAN, they have established infrastructures in different fields like education, housing, and economic uplift for the community.

There are about 25,000 Bohras in America. Most migrated here since the 1970s and have settled in such cities as DETROIT, CHICAGO, and NEW YORK CITY. There are further subdivisions within the Bohra community. The first DAUDI BOHRA mosque was built in 1982 in Detroit. Even in America, most Bohras observe a strict DRESS code and prefer to communicate in their native language, Gujarati.

## THE TWELVER SHI'A IN THE UNITED STATES

Among the early Muslim immigrants to America in the 1880s were Twelver Shi'as from what was then Greater Syria. Between 1900 and 1914, several hundred Shi'a newcomers settled in all parts of country, but especially in the Midwest. Many sought work at Detroit's Ford Motor Company. There was also a Shi'a settlement in Michigan City, Indiana. Early Lebanese Shi'as also settled in New York City; Quincy,



Massachusetts; Chicago; CEDAR RAPIDS IOWA; TOLEDO, OHIO; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and Ross, NORTH DAKOTA. By 1922, a larger community of Shi'as started to crystallize, especially in Detroit.

The early Shi'a immigrants, most of whom were Lebanese, were quite liberal in their lifestyles and often assimilated to mainstream white American culture. They did not mark important dates in the Shi'a calendar, like *ASHURA*, when Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet, was killed in Karbala. The steady influx of immigrants led to the establishment of Shi'a institutions and centers of worship. The first Shi'a mosque was perhaps built in Michigan City in 1924. A booklet published by the Islamic Center of Michigan City states that the center was first organized on April 26, 1914, under the name of "The Bader Elmoneer Society of Michigan City, Indiana." In the early 1920s, the Bader Elmoneer Society purchased land and erected a building.

In the 1940s, Shi'as in Detroit purchased a bank, which they converted to a meeting place called the Hashemite hall. They gathered there to mark religious and social occasions. The first Shi'a scholar to come to America was Imam MOHAMAD JAWAD CHIRRI in 1949. Under his guidance, the Shi'as in Dearborn established the Islamic Center of America in 1963. With a population of about 75,000 Lebanese, Iraqi, and Iranian immigrants, Dearborn presently has one of the largest Shi'a Muslim communities in the United States.

Sensing the needs of the Shi'a American community, the most prominent Shi'a spiritual leader of the time, Ayatullah al-Khu'i (?–1992) sent an emissary to establish a center in Jamaica, New York, in 1976. This marked the beginning of an epoch in which the Shi'a religious leadership would be actively engaged in furnishing religious guidance to its followers in the West. Gradually, the Shi'a community established religious centers and infrastructures that would protect and perpetuate the identity of its members. There are 200 Shi'a centers and institutions in the United States.

Unlike the earlier immigrants, Shi'a Muslims who arrived after 1965 were ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse, though the majority likely came from Iran. The dramatic growth in Shi'a population was also due to adverse sociopolitical conditions in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. The 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, the repressive social and political situation in Iraq, civil strife in Pakistan, the independence of Bangladesh, the civil war in Lebanon, adverse socioeconomic conditions in East Africa, and the establishment of the anti-Shi'a Taliban regime in Afghanistan have all contributed to the increased Shi'a presence. In addition, beginning in the 1970s, some African Americans began to convert to Shi'a Islam. There are at least three Shi'a Sufi organizations within the Iranian community in California.

As the Shi'a community became more diverse, it also fractured along ethnic and cultural lines. Major cities like New York, LOS ANGELES, Houston, Detroit, and Chicago are characterized by disparate Shi'a centers established along ethnic lines. The ethnic division within the Shi'a community has been further accentuated by the absence of a singular, centralized authority that could provide religious identity and cohesion to encompass different ethnic affiliations. To date, there has been no institution that could act as a unifying factor for all Shi'a groups.

#### ISLAMIC-AMERICAN RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Some early Muslim immigrants from the Middle East and South Asia sought to keep their faith intact and perform their religious obligations together. They also felt the need to socialize and maintain regular contact with their religious brethren. Since they were a minority, they often stressed their Islamic, rather than sectarian, identity. So, despite their doctrinal and juridical differences, the early Shi'a and Sunni Muslims cooperated with one another. They often intermarried, worshipped in the same mosques, marked social occasions together, and represented Islam to the non-Muslim community.

In 1963, the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA) was formed by students at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. The students' overall commitment to Islam overrode sectarian considerations, with Sunni and Shi'a students worshipping together. Four early MSA presidents were Shi'as.

The Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 and the emergence of conservative Sunni Islamic movements in the United States increased sectarian tensions. Religious difference was imported by foreign-based Sunni movements such as the Salafis, Wahhabis, Hizb al-Tahrir, and the Tablighi Jama'at. Many of these movements have declared Shi'as to be non-Muslims (*kafirs*). The Shi'as also contributed to the conflict. Especially in South Asian centers, many speakers have derided and reviled the companions of the Prophet and his wife, Aisha. They have also published literature that disparages figures that Sunnis hold in high esteem.

Tensions between Sunnis and Shi'as increased in mosques, on campuses, on the INTERNET, and even in correctional facilities. Shi'a inmates often complain that they are victimized more by fellow Muslims than by non-Muslims. The U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 and subsequent sectarian clashes there further escalated tensions between the two groups, and the bombing of the Golden Mosque, a Shi'a holy shrine, in Samarra, Iraq, in February, 2006, made them even worse.

In some ways, the United States provided an ideal environment for the growth of religious diversity among Muslim Americans. Just as Christian Americans had split into a large variety of denominations in the 19th century, Muslim Americans in the 20th century gave birth to a vast array of different religious ideas, communities, and prac-

tices. Without a central state authority endorsing one form of Islam over another, Muslim Americans used Friday sermons, lectures, workshops, religious bookstores, tapes, CDs, the Internet, and print media to articulate their religious differences. Fundamentalist and progressive groups alike used the same media to compete for followers.

Religious leaders in both communities have called for reconciliation. In 2007, Sunni and Shi'a imams in Southern California launched a nationwide movement to promote unity among different branches of the faith and help prevent acts of violence in America. In a ceremony that was later repeated in Detroit and at a 2007 conference in Chicago, a number of prominent Sunni and Shi'a religious scholars in Southern California signed a "code of honor" that offered strategies for overcoming and avoiding divisions within the community. The code opposed the circulation of literature that incites sectarian hatred and encouraged balanced and objective dialogue among Sunni and Shi'a scholars.

#### SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICAN LEADERSHIP

The Shi'a experience has differed from the Sunni experience due to the influence exerted by Shi'a scholars and the institution of *marja'iyya*. A *marji'* is the most learned juridical authority in the Shi'a community, and his pronouncements on Islamic LAW are followed by those who acknowledge him as the religious guide. During the absence of the 12th Shi'a imam, who is believed to be the promised messiah, the *marji'* is seen by the Shi'as as invested with the authority of interpreting the relevance of Islamic norms for the modern era, thereby enabling him to influence the religious and social lives of his followers. The process of following the juridical rulings of the most learned jurist is called *taqlid* (literally, imitation).

The obligation to follow the religious dictates of the *marji'* has meant that the interpretations and pronouncements of the *maraji'* (pl. of *marji'*), formulated in the Muslim lands, are seen as both normative and legally binding on their followers. Such a structured system of religious leadership and imitation of the most learned is lacking in Sunni Islam, where there is no recognized clergy that can claim sole monopoly of the interpretation of religious texts. The obligation to follow the rulings of the *maraji'* has required American Shi'as to be allied to the *maraji'* rather than to any foreign government. It has also acted as a catalyst for unity in the Shi'a community by fostering ties among different Shi'as who have often been divided by culture, ethnicity, and language.

In recent years, the *maraji'* have become more accessible to their followers. Besides establishing religious centers and Internet sites, they have sent emissaries to visit them. Ayatullah Seestani, for example, who lives in Iraq, regularly sends his representative to monitor the progress of and report on the social and other needs of the American community. The Imam Mahdi Association of Marjaeya (IMAM), located in Los

Angeles, is currently the liaison office of Ayatullah Seestani in the United States. The appointment by the *maraji'* of financial and religious deputies has enabled community members to provide facilities for religious education for the Shi'a community and has generated the confidence to engage in major projects such as the construction of mosques, Islamic centers, and seminaries considered necessary for the continued religious and spiritual well-being of the Shi'a community. In addition to establishing religious institutions and community centers, the *maraji'* have tried to meet the needs of their followers by responding to their questions and issuing juridical rulings that respond to the everyday concerns of Muslim Americans.

Apart from the *maraji'*, authority in the American Shi'a community has also been wielded by local religious scholars, or ulama. Most Shi'a ulama have immigrated to the United States since the 1980s and originated from the Middle East or South Asia. By 2010, there were approximately 150 such scholars in North America. The majority of these scholars work within Islamic centers and perform basic religious functions such as leading prayers, delivering sermons, and presiding at marriages and funerals. In an effort to unite the diverse ethnic groups that make up the American Shi'a community, an indigenous Council of Shi'a 'Ulama was formed in 1993. The council has met frequently since then.

#### SHI'A OUTREACH AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN AMERICA

As more Shi'a immigrants settled in the United States, they came to view America as a fertile place for seeking converts. The 1980s saw the establishment of Shi'a privately run institutions that both served the needs of the Shi'a community and sought closer relations with non-Muslim Americans. But most American Shi'as have been more concerned with maintaining their distinct communal and sectarian identity than with engaging in dialogue with other faith groups. Since they form a small percentage of the wider Muslim-American community, their primary focus has been the preservation rather than extension of their religious and spiritual boundaries.

Since the events of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, there has been greater engagement with U.S. POLITICS and the public sphere more generally. The presidential election of 2004 proved to the Shi'a community that political cooperation with Sunnis would benefit both groups. Sunnis and Shi'as supported voter registration drives and voted in record numbers that year. Shi'as have also cooperated with Sunnis to build a Muslim voting bloc that would unseat Republican and other politicians whom many Muslim Americans consider unsympathetic toward the Muslim world.

American Shi'as have often felt the need to voice their opposition to U.S. foreign policy regarding Iraq and Iran. Such instances have forced American Shi'as to abandon their traditionally ambivalent, even quietistic stance toward

political activity. The Shi'as also came to the realization that civic engagement may be the most powerful way to fulfill their political aspirations. While seeking the strong support of other Muslim Americans, most of these candidates have avoided any formal association with Shi'a religious institutions. Shi'a politicians and citizens have also attempted to influence local political races by cooperating with Sunnis. Shi'a institutions have encouraged such coalition building, emphasizing the need to support a common candidate for school boards, the mayor's office, and the state legislature.

### CONCLUSION

The past decade has witnessed diverse Shi'a communities emigrating to the United States. The major challenge that the community has faced is translating a majority religion to an area in which it is a nascent minority. The struggle among American Shi'as for the definition of the self, to give meaning to their new identity as Muslim Americans, and to the new sociopolitical context of their existence is manifesting itself in tensions between the traditional and modern, intellectual and conservative, indigenous and immigrant, young and old, and between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims. The community also comprises youths and African-American converts who identify with an American culture. Indigenous conflicts have arisen due to an immigrant community's having to come to terms with an alien culture.

*Liyakat Takim*

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### Siddiqi, Muzammil H. (ca. 1943– ) *religious leader, activist*

During the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Muzammil H. Siddiqi emerged as one of the most prominent Muslim-American leaders in the United States, serving as president of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) from 1996 to 2000 as well as chair of the FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA (FCNA) during the first decade of the 21st century.

Born in 1943 (the exact date is unknown), he studied at two of the most prominent Islamic institutions in India: the Aligarh Muslim University and Dar al-'Ulum Nadwa in Lucknow. In 1965, Siddiqi graduated from the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia with a degree in ARABIC and Islamic Studies and in 1974 received a Ph.D. from Harvard Divinity School, for which he wrote a dissertation entitled "Muslim Views of Christianity in the Middle Ages: An Analytical Study of Ibn Taymiyah's Work on Christianity."

From 1976 to 1980, Siddiqi served as chair of the Department of Religious Affairs at the Muslim World League, a Saudi-funded missionary organization. He also was chair of the Religious Affairs Committee of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION of the United States and Canada. Since the early 1980s, Siddiqi has written a column for the *Pakistan Link* and has broadcast a weekly radio program from Southern California, where he has also been a director of the Islamic Society in Orange County. In 1996, he was elected to lead ISNA and, after stepping down in 2000, took a post as chair of the FCNA, a position from which he could influence the application of SHARI'A, Islamic law and ethics, to Muslim-American life.

Siddiqi's former association with Saudi-funded organizations such as the Muslim World League and his criticisms of certain aspects of UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS with the Muslim world, including U.S. policy toward Palestine, have led some conservative critics to accuse him of supporting terrorism. Yet interfaith activists and even politicians have cultivated close ties with Siddiqi. Siddiqi has been active in various INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS, attending meetings of the World Council of Churches and participating in more than 200 joint academic presentations with Jewish and Christian colleagues.

Among his many published works is an extended interfaith conversation entitled *The Abraham Connection* (1994).

After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, President George W. Bush invited him to deliver a Muslim prayer at the national memorial service held in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. From his position as chair of FCNA, he led a national effort to condemn all forms of terrorism committed in the name of Islamic religion after 9/11.

*Mashal Saif*

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**slaves** See AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES.

#### **Sikander, Shahzia** (1969– ) *artist, MacArthur Award winner*

A prominent artist in the United States, Shahzia Sikander was named a MacArthur fellow in 2006, a prestigious award given by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation recognizing outstanding achievement in a variety of fields and disciplines. The "genius" award, as the MacArthur is often called, recognized her contributions to the world as an artist, working in the painstaking and labor-intensive medium of Indo-Persian miniature painting. In addition to painting, Sikander's work traverses a variety of media, including drawings, large-scale wall installations, digital animation, and video.

Born in 1969 in Lahore, Pakistan, Sikander was trained at the Department of Miniature Painting at Lahore's National College of Arts, where she received her B.F.A. in 1992, and continued her studies at the Rhode Island School of Design, in Providence, Rhode Island, earning an M.F.A. in 1995. She later became a fellow of the Glassell School of Art's Core Program in Houston (1995–97) and an artist-in-residence at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles (2005).

Sikander's experimental approach to the genre of miniature painting in the mid-1980s in Lahore was seen as anachronistic, though her own creative expressions combined the genre with contemporary art practices. Her work launched a renewed commitment to the art of miniature painting

and gained a substantial following in Lahore, where the Department of Miniature Painting at the National College of Arts has seen a dramatic increase in the number of young artists now pursuing majors in the Fine Arts program.

Sikander's work recasts the formal artistic debates about the conventional methods of addressing traditional miniature paintings. Using her various geographic locations as a positive experience, she reassembled her miniature paintings to expand the formal properties of the artistic practice often classified as craft, even as she questions the materials and scale of the work. Using wit, irony, and paradox, Sikander's artwork draws upon a variety of media to push the boundaries of the miniature tradition. As much as her work is interested in the formal aspects and properties of artistic practices, the content of Sikander's work addresses themes of Islam, Pakistan, India, Hindu/Muslim relations, imagery and iconography, as well as notions of tradition and modernity, East and West, hybridity, and women.

Although based in New York, Sikander works in various locations and often these are visually reflected in her work. Her works can be found in major collections at institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, all in New York. Collections in California include those of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and San Diego Museum of Art.

Sikander's work has appeared in countless solo and group shows in the United States and around the world. Her work was featured in solo exhibitions at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, in 2007; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, from 2007 to 2008; and Ikon Gallery in Birmingham, England, in 2008. Group shows include various exhibits and biennales around the world, including "Shahzia Sikander Selects: Works from the Permanent Collection," exhibited at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, New York, from March to September 2009.

In addition to winning the MacArthur Award, Sikander was named a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2006. She received the Tamgha-e-Imtiaz, National Medal of Honor, from the Government of Pakistan, in 2005 and the Commendation Award from the Mayor's Office, New York City, in 2003. Her work has been reviewed in numerous art and other publications including *Artforum*, *ARTnews*, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Time*, and in numerous academic journals and publications.

*Munir Jiwa*

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## social workers

According to the International Federation of Social Workers, social work "promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being." Though Muslim-American social workers as a trained class of professionals emerged only in the late 20th century, the first Muslim-American social service providers to work for social change and more healthy human relationships were arguably the many AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM groups that began in the 1920s and 1930s. Often focused on expanding economic opportunity, establishing stronger relationships among family members, challenging unfair laws, and battling ideas that black people were inferior, African-American Muslim leaders such as NOBLE DREW ALI (1886–1929), W. D. FARD (ca. 1877–ca. 1934), WALI AKRAM (1904–94), and MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN (ca. 1880–1957) saw Islam, variously defined, as a source of personal, political, and social liberation.

From the 1930s to the 1960s, a period in which the vast majority of converts to Islam in the United States were African-American, most African-American Muslim groups attempted to address themselves to the "whole person," that is, to find solutions to their members' political, economic, social, and cultural concerns. The NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), which grew quickly under the leadership of ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) and MALCOLM X (1925–65) from the 1930s through the 1960s, was the best known of these groups. For many members, the NOI provided a complete way of life, structuring members' daily lives around various business activities, religious rituals, social voluntarism, and educational programs. Other African-American Muslim groups, including the ISLAMIC PARTY OF NORTH AMERICA (IPNA), acted in a similar fashion, and IPNA launched neighborhood cleanup drives, conducted a prison ministry and food drives, and offered classes in crafts, sewing, and hygiene.

Though immigrant Muslims had performed social services informally within their local communities for a century, one of the first immigrant-led social work agencies was the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS), established in 1971. Housed in a storefront building located on Vernor Highway in Dearborn, Michigan, ACCESS was led by Muslim-American ALIYA HASSEN, a pioneering female leader. As the organization grew and

Michigan's Arab population increased, ACCESS provided services related to job referral, translation, health emergencies, immigration, and legal aid to thousands of new Muslim and non-Muslim immigrants.

By the late 20th century, the number of formal Muslim-American social service agencies and licensed Muslim-American social workers had dramatically increased. In 1993, for example, the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA (ICNA) initiated a domestic assistance program to develop a network of local agencies under the larger umbrella of the ICNA. As part of its network, ICNA sponsored Muslim Family Services, United Muslim Movement against Homelessness, Muslim Women's Help Network, Housing Outreach for Muslim Sisters, and the Crescent Social Assistance Agency.

In 1998, Belkis Altareb, Maryam Funchess, Aneesh Nadir, and Shahina Siddiqui formed the Islamic Social Services Association, attempting to bring together Muslims working in fields of social work, service delivery, and mental health to discuss and coordinate their activities. Social services pioneers Sharifa Alkhateeb, Abu Jamal Teague, Imam Khalid Griggs, Iman Elkadi, Altaf Hussain, and Mohamed Magid were among 60 participants in a 1999 conference that aimed to raise awareness of the social service needs of Muslim Americans in the United States and Canada. The U.S.-based branch of the movement went on to offer workshops on marriage, caring for Muslim patients, and family violence prevention.

A number of Muslim-American organizations committed to reducing domestic violence among Muslim Americans began in this period. In 1997, for example, Hadayai Majeed helped to begin the Baitul Salaam (Peaceful House) Network in ATLANTA, seeking to raise awareness and provide counsel and shelter to victims of domestic violence. By 2007, the program had sheltered 591 women and children, answered more than 9,000 phone calls, and indirectly supported the creation of a dozen domestic violence awareness organizations and support groups.

Other Muslim-American advocates of mental health began to offer free mental health services to the poor. In 1995, Dr. Basheer Ahmed, a psychiatrist, helped to establish the Muslim Community Center for Human Services (MCCHS) in Fort Worth, Texas, which offered free counseling services, a domestic violence hotline, health fairs, and other services to those in need. In October 1998, MCCHS expanded its services by opening the Al-Shifa medical clinic to provide culturally and religiously sensitive primary care to underserved populations. Later, in 2007, female physicians and a pediatrician volunteered at a women's clinic for those female patients who preferred to see female health-care providers. Between 2006 and 2008, Al-Shifa clinic served a total of 1,200 to 1,800 patients, most of whom would have had no other source for treatment.

Muslim-American social workers in this period also focused on the challenges faced by displaced persons, including Muslims, who settled in the United States. From 1988 to 2003, approximately 15 percent of all refugees who arrived in the United States were Muslim—a total of 210,000 people. They came from 77 different countries, spoke dozens of languages, and, in many cases, arrived from the war-torn countries of Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia. Fariyal Ross-Sheriff, director of the Ph.D. program in social work at Howard University, became an expert on their lives and, in addition to her many academic articles on the subject, co-authored *Muslim Refugees in the United States: A Guide for Service Providers* (2003).

The al-Qaeda attacks against the United States on SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, posed special challenges for Muslim-American social workers as they sought to address the needs of both Muslim and non-Muslim Americans. In addition, the attacks resulted in a broad backlash against Muslim Americans, including physical assaults, deadly threats, stereotyping, and discrimination at work, in school, and on the street. One study of Arab-American experience by Wahiba Abu-Ras, a social work educator at Adelphi University, and Soleman H. Abu-Bader, a social work educator at Howard University, illustrated that social workers needed to help Muslims and Arabs cope with victimization since 9/11 and pointed out that many social work professionals lacked the cultural and linguistic competencies needed to address these issues.

From its informal origins in the early 20th century, Muslim-American social work has evolved into a broad net-

work of providers and advocates that now includes religious leaders, Muslim-American organizations, secular and religious social service agencies, volunteers, and professional social workers. Muslim social workers have assisted individuals with problems related to poverty, marital struggles, aging, disability, substance abuse, grief and loss, domestic violence, mental health, child abuse, refugee and resettlement adjustment, parent-teen relations, cultural conflicts, mediation, blood vengeance, incarceration, discrimination, and translation needs. They have also attempted to serve as advocates or liaisons between their clients and service providers.

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### Somali Muslim immigrants

Although Somali citizens have been immigrating to the United States since WORLD WAR II, moving predominantly to NEW YORK CITY and other East Coast cities, the 1991 civil war in Somalia, a nation in East Africa, accelerated refugee immigration throughout the 1990s. By 2010, approximately 150,000 Somali citizens had come to the United States. The largest concentration of refugees settled in Minnesota and Ohio, with smaller populations dispersing to 34 other states. U.S. government statistics indicate that approximately 25,000 immigrants moved to Minnesota, and the Somali Community



Saidah A. Sharif is leader of a social service agency in Newark, New Jersey, that aids Muslim victims of domestic violence. (Jerry McCrea/Star Ledger/Corbis)

Association of Ohio (SCAO) estimated that 45,000 Somali immigrants settled in central Ohio.

Since only an estimated 7 percent of immigrants could speak English well enough to gain and keep English-speaking jobs in the 1990s, refugee families struggled to find adequate employment. Family members relied on aid, entrepreneurial activity, and personal savings. Many populated the service industry and other jobs that required little formal English-language education. Approximately 120 Somali employees, for example, found jobs at Viracon, which fabricates glass for large-scale architectural projects. Primarily located in Owatonna, Minnesota, Viracon also has facilities in Statesboro, Georgia, and St. George, Utah. Because Viracon accommodated the employees' religious practices, especially the *salat*, or ritual prayer, Somali Muslim employees became loyal to Viracon and recruited other Somalis to the company.

Where Somali refugees were geographically concentrated, they established various advocacy groups, including educational organizations and community bridge groups. The SCAO was founded in 1996 in an effort to aid new immigrants with the challenges of ASSIMILATION. Immigrant residents in Minnesota have also established the Somali American Media Association (SAMA), a multilingual news organization dedicated to keeping the Somali immigrant population informed about major events occurring both locally and around the world. Originally meant to promote communication between Somalis and non-Somalis in addition to providing news from home, SAMA has become a venue for Somali participation in American society. By broadcasting their own television program three nights per week in both Somali and English, SAMA has nurtured communication between Somali American immigrants and other local residents.

Similarly, a number of Somali immigrants have been successful in establishing business ventures often related to helping others in need. Washington, D.C., resident Mohamed Ali, for instance, a devout Muslim who attends prayer services at the ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C., is the president and CEO of IDEA, Inc. IDEA, which stands for International Development Enterprise Access, is headquartered in Herndon, Virginia. Its purpose is to help provide health and educational services to developing countries as well as to African immigrants to the United States. Consistent with the Islamic tradition of *sadaqah*, wherein an observant Muslim does what he or she can to act in a morally just way, IDEA seeks to assist with the improvement of the standard of living for developing nations.

Like many other refugee and recent immigrants, Somali immigrants have maintained strong ties to their homeland. Much of their community activism has remained focused on local immigrant and refugee issues, or on international events. The Confederation of Somali Communities was founded in

Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1994 for the purpose of helping refugees navigate between contributing to American society and maintaining their own culture. Similarly, the Somali-American Political Engagement Committee and Somali Intellectual League were designed to promote civic participation and academic success, respectively.

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### South Asian–American Muslims

South Asians are one of the three largest groups of Muslims in the United States. The other two are African Americans and Arab Americans. South Asia includes people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives Islands, and even, according to some, Afghanistan. The current U.S. Census includes most South Asians under the category "Asian Indian." Before 1947, the Census counted "East Indians," a category that included people from present-day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. India and Pakistan gained their independence from Britain in 1947, and Bangladesh split off from Pakistan in 1971.

South Asian Muslims have immigrated to the United States in three different periods: the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the 1920s, and from 1965 to the present. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, several dozen Muslim farmers from British India's northwestern province Punjab came to California and adjacent states and became farm laborers and, in a few cases, landowners. At the same time, small numbers of Indian Muslim sailors from India's eastern province of Bengal were leaving British merchant marine vessels to settle in the port cities of New Orleans and New York. These early immigrant Muslims married local women, primarily Mexican and Mexican-American women in California (most of whom were Catholic) and African American and Puerto Rican women in New Orleans and New York City. In only some cases did these families pass on a strong religious identity to their children.

South Asian Muslim men in the American West entrusted the religious training of the children to their largely Catholic mothers, while the families in New Orleans and New York often emphasized their racial heritage as "men of color." These pioneer South Asian Muslim men established families that were Muslim-descended, primarily working class, and racially or ethnically mixed. Their

descendants identified more as Punjabis or Bengalis than as Muslims, at least until the partition of British India in 1947 into India and Pakistan. At that time, consciousness of their Muslim identity increased among some of the descendants. These two groups of pioneer South Asian Muslims have been largely overlooked by later South Asian Muslim immigrants.

In contrast, the second movement of South Asian Muslims to the United States, although even smaller in number, had a major impact on strands of Islam in America. By the 1920s, several South Asian Muslim religious preachers from the Ahmadi movement, a late 19th-century Islamic movement based in India's Punjab, had arrived in the United States. These men addressed themselves primarily to African Americans because it was African-American Muslims who were the first to organize on the basis of the Islamic religion in the United States in the early 20th century. (Arab immigrants who arrived in the late 19th century, the majority of them Christian, organized on the basis of national origin rather than religion.)

At the same time, the evolving African-American Muslim communities had limited contact with immigrant and foreign Islamic traditions, for the most part did not know ARABIC, and developed their own versions of Islam, defining themselves as different and emphatically separate from the dominant Anglo- and Christian-American culture. The well-educated Ahmadi missionaries were the first to reach out to African-American Muslims, bringing them English translations of the QUR'AN and publishing the *Muslim Sunrise*, the first English-language Muslim magazine in America, in the 1920s. They told the early African-American groups about the five pillars of Islam and directed their attention to mainstream Sunni teachings.

Despite the importance of race in American history and Islam's promise of racial equality, this early connection between indigenous and immigrant Muslims in the United States has received little attention, and efforts have been made to suppress or erase it. Following political decisions taken in Pakistan to declare Ahmadis non-Muslims, some post-1965 South Asian Muslim immigrants have reflected homeland prejudices and policies against Ahmadis in the United States. Disavowing the Ahmadis has negative implications for contemporary immigrant Muslim relationships with the sizeable African-American Muslim constituency, a constituency that won early legal victories that have broadened the rights of all Muslims in the United States. Yet there is an apparent unwillingness on the part of many immigrant Muslims, not only South Asians, to acknowledge African-American Muslims fully and to work with their heritage.

The third major movement of South Asian Muslims to the United States came when the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 redressed the historic discrimination against Asians. The

1965 act vastly increased the numbers of immigrants from all of Asia, and it set preferences for well-educated, professional people. The South Asian Muslims emigrating to the United States after 1965 have been able to make significant contributions to Muslim-American institutional development because of their high educational and occupational qualifications and their homeland political experience. Like other South Asian immigrants, they brought with them long-standing traditions of cultural pluralism in the Indian subcontinent and political experience with democracy.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Muslims from South Asia came forward as key leaders of ambitious efforts to unite all Muslims in the United States. Earlier, Arab political organizations had included both Christians and Muslims, and although the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS (FIA) IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA had established a successful national network of mosques and even Muslim summer camps in the 1950s, many post-1965 immigrants and students sometimes deemed the FIA and its leadership to be insufficient. As they joined Arab Americans of the post-1965 generation, South Asian–American Muslims became some of the most prominent spokespersons for Muslim communities in the United States.

The highly qualified and ambitious new South Asian Muslim immigrants contrasted with Arab-Muslim immigrants, also a growing group after 1965, in several ways. The South Asians speak many languages, but most were well educated in English. Most also shared a British colonial heritage and post-independence histories that included some degree of experience with democratic political processes. The South Asian newcomers represented many religions, and religious diversity has long been accepted in South Asian societies. The historical experience of the subcontinent until 1947 featured religious pluralism, and the numerically dominant group, from India, brought familiarity with pluralism as well as democracy (immigrants from India include Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Sikhs, and Parsis or Zoroastrians). Diversity within Islam has always been striking in South Asia, and South Asian Muslim immigrants represented many strands of Islamic beliefs and practices and many kinds of Sunnis, Shi'as, and Sufis, especially from India. Muslims being a substantial minority, some 12–13 percent, in India, Muslims probably constituted about that percentage of Indian immigrants in the United States.

These post-1965 South Asian Muslim immigrants have had the means to import and maintain many elements of their cultural and religious traditions. The Asian Indian 1990 and 2000 census profiles give an idea of the resources of Muslims from India and Pakistan. Those immigrants born in India had the highest median household income, family income, and per capita income of any foreign-born group in the 1990 Census. In the 2000 Census, immigrants born



in India had the third-highest median household income (behind only South Africans and Britishers), the second-highest median family income (behind South Africans), and the second-highest median per capita income (behind Britishers) of foreign-born groups. In both 1990 and 2000, Asian Indians had the highest percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher and were among the highest percentages in managerial and professional fields. The largest ethnic body of doctors in the United States is the American Association of Physicians from India, and one estimate puts Indian doctors at more than 20,000, or nearly 4 percent of the nation's medical doctors. There is also an Association of Pakistani Physicians of North America.

A spurt of mosque-building was initiated by the post-1965 Indian and Pakistani Muslims, and many post-1965 South Asian Muslim professionals have played major roles in interpreting SHARI'AH, or Islamic law and ethics, and establishing religious institutions and political organizations in the United States. Analysis of the leadership of national Muslim and Islamic organizations of the 1980s and 1990s shows that Indian and Pakistani Muslims were at least equally if not more prominent than Arabs and African Americans, and national coalitions to mobilize the Muslim vote in both 2000 and 2004 were led by a Pakistani-American political scientist.

Arguably, South Asian Muslims offered new and relatively fresh political opportunities for Muslims in the United States. The Luce-Celler Bill of 1946 granted the rights of citizenship to South Asian and Filipino Americans. As a result, the Punjabi pioneers helped elect Dalip Singh Saund, a Sikh from California's Imperial Valley, the first congressman born in India (as well as Asia) in 1956. The post-1965 South Asian immigrants, including Muslims, were becoming naturalized U.S. citizens and plunging into American politics by the end of the 20th century. South Asian Muslims were active in both Democratic and Republican party political funding and campaigning. Some were organizing on the basis of religion and trying to mobilize a Muslim bloc vote for whichever party seemed more promising on issues of interest to them.

Some South Asian Muslims have been leaders in various progressive Muslim movements. In response to the strict gender segregation of some South Asian mosques, South Asian–American women have sometimes led what has been called the gender jihad. A woman of Indian origin, Asra Nomani, has been a public figure in the struggle to hold mixed-gender Friday prayers. Other South Asian–Muslim Americans have been relatively open to discussion of sexual issues, and some have joined various LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER MUSLIM organizations such as Al-Fatiha, Queer Jihad, and TriKone.

In summary, for more than a century, South Asian Muslims have contributed significantly to Muslim-American

and, ultimately, to American politics and social life in several ways. First, those who came in the early 20th century, the Punjabi farmers and Bengali ex-sailors, married local women of Hispanic and African-American background, their diasporic encounters leading to intermixture and cultural accommodation. Second, Muslim missionaries from India established linkages with indigenous African-American Muslims in the 1920s that strongly influenced the directions taken by African-American Muslims. Third, the more recent, post-1965 South Asian Muslim immigrants have brought ambitious and well-qualified new leadership to the developing Muslim-American religious and political organizations. Relatively new on the political scene, South Asian–Muslim Americans have been building bridges among Muslims and to the broader American public.

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**Staton, Dakota (Aliyah Rabia) (1930–2007) jazz singer**

One of the most underrated JAZZ vocalists of the 20th century, Dakota Staton was born on June 3, 1930, in Pittsburgh (some sources give the date of her birth as 1932). She attended Pittsburgh's George Westinghouse High School, where one of her classmates was pianist AHMAD JAMAL. Staton began her formal musical instruction at the Filion School of Music in Pittsburgh. Her first steady singing gig was with the Pittsburgh-based Joe Wespray Orchestra. After spending several years performing in such Midwestern and Canadian cities as Indianapolis, CLEVELAND, DETROIT, St. Louis, Minneapolis, Toronto, and Montreal, Staton eventually made her way to NEW YORK CITY, landing a gig with the Baby Grand nightclub.

At the Baby Grand, she was discovered by David Cavanaugh, a producer for Capitol Records who promptly signed Staton to the Capitol Records label. Staton's first single, released in 1954, was "What Do You Know About Love." Quickly gaining the attention of the jazz press, Staton won *Down Beat* magazine's "Most Promising New Comer" award in 1955. Two years later, Staton released her most popular recording to date, "The Late, Late Show." The album of the same name reached as high as number 4 on the *Billboard* album charts. The success of "The Late, Late Show" led to a string of acclaimed albums, such as *In the Night* (1957), a collaboration with pianist George Shearing; *Dynamic!* (1958); and *Dakota at Storyville* (1961).

In 1958, Staton married Muslim trumpeter Talib Ahmad Dawud, a native Antiguan who had played with such jazz greats as Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Dizzy Gillespie. Staton converted to Islam and adopted the Muslim name Aliyah Rabia, retaining her original name professionally. As a newly converted AHMADI MUSLIM AMERICAN, Staton, along with her husband, was an outspoken critic of ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) and the NATION OF ISLAM, which they considered to be a heretical Muslim movement.

In the 1960s, Staton relocated to England for a time but continued to record and perform. After ending her association with Capitol Records in 1962, Staton went on to record for such labels as United Artists, Groove Merchant, and Muse. Much of this material, however, remains out of print. Staton's singing style possessed elements of pop and R&B, so much so that Staton often shared the bill with rock and roll acts such as Fats Domino. Though she had a long career, her overtures to pop music and R&B may have been one reason that she was overshadowed by such performers as Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughn, and Ella Fitzgerald, at least in the minds of many jazz critics.

Well into the 1990s, Staton continued to record and perform live. In her later years, Staton began to incorporate more

gospel and blues elements in her singing style. Dakota Staton died at the age of 76 in New York on April 10, 2007. She was survived by her brother, saxophonist Fred Staton. Her legacy was as a singer whose style bridged the gap between traditional jazz singers and contemporary pop divas.

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**stereotypes**

Stereotypes are oversimplified, unquestioned assumptions about an entire group of people. Though they are not necessarily negative and do not necessarily lead toward the mistreatment of other human beings, historians and other scholars of Muslim-American history are in wide agreement that the stereotyping of Muslims in the United States, like that of other religious and ethnic minorities such as blacks, Indians, and Latina/os, is generally negative and harmful, leading to various forms of DISCRIMINATION. Sometimes characterized as "Islamophobia," or the fear of Islam, anti-Muslim stereotypes have included the assumptions that Muslims are generally violent, fanatical, exotic, untrustworthy, and in the case of Muslim women, oppressed.

In *Islamophobia: Making Muslims the Enemy* (2008), religious studies scholars Peter Gottschalk and Gabriel Greenberg define "Islamophobia" as "a social anxiety toward Islam and Muslim cultures that is largely unexamined by, yet deeply ingrained in, Americans." Its roots can be traced from conflicts between Christians and Muslims in the European Middle Ages and the colonial era of American history to UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS with Muslim-majority empires and nations in the 19th and 20th centuries. In many cases, the stereotyping of Muslim people in the Thirteen Colonies and the United States has been directly related to the social, political, and economic interaction of American institutions and people with Muslims abroad. Such interactions have fueled the negative stereotype that "they" are not like "us," leading to portrayals of Muslims that embody religious, racial, and ethnic prejudice.

**FROM THE COLONIAL ERA TO THE  
EARLY AMERICAN REPUBLIC**

Anglo Americans in the colonial period inherited many negative stereotypes of Muslims from Europe. These stereotypes were developed in the Middle Ages during the age

of Muslim expansion into Spain and during the Crusades, when Roman Catholic popes and other religious and political leaders from Europe waged war against Muslims in the holy land of Palestine. The relatively stronger Muslim states and empires of this era struck fear or caused anxiety in the hearts of many Europeans, who saw Islam as competition to their own creed of Christianity, which dominated much of Europe.

The prophet Muhammad was subject to especially virulent stereotyping, since he was blamed for creating what was considered by European Christians to be a false and misleading religion (Muslims themselves believed that Abraham, not Muhammad, was the first Muslim). In his 14th-century allegorical poem *Inferno*, the Italian poet Dante placed Muhammad in the second-lowest circle of hell, where the prophet was condemned to a horrible torture: For creating a religious schism in the church, he was to be split from his anus to his chin in perpetuity.

Though Anglo-American colonists inherited these negative views of Islam, their stereotypes of Muslims were also shaped by the more immediate seizure of British ships along the North African or “Barbary” coast in the late 17th century. In 1671, for example, Captain William Foster from Roxbury, Massachusetts, was captured by pirates and ransomed. Reacting to similar events, American preacher Cotton Mather criticized such pirates as the “fierce monsters of Africa,” and as “Mahometan [Muhammadan] Turks and Moors, and Devils.” Depicted as cruel, licentious, and brutish, Muslims were held up as the mirror image of the civilized, compassionate, and gentle Christian.

In addition to being viewed as brutish, uncivilized, and tyrannical, Muslims were depicted in the Thirteen Colonies and the early United States as symbols of the anti-Christ, the figure who, according to Christian doctrine, will appear at the end of the world to battle, unsuccessfully, with Christ. Beginning in the late 17th century—and continuing until the 21st century—prophetic teachers of Christianity attempted to interpret political events and natural disasters in the Middle East and Muslim world more generally as signs that the end time was near, often comparing real world happenings to biblical prophecies in Isaiah, Revelation, and other biblical scriptures.

From the colonial era to the early republic, American politicians would regularly use “Muslim” as an epithet, meant to discredit an opponent in the heat of argument. During and immediately after the American Revolution (1775–83), Islam and Muslims were often cited as examples of despotism and tyranny. In 1790, for example, Vice President John Adams voiced his disapproval of the 1789 French Revolution by saying that it would lead to fanaticism among the French people, who would follow “the first mad despot, who, with the enthusiasm of another Mahomet [Muhammad]” would

try to lead them. Later, critics of Adams returned the favor. After Adams became president in 1797 and then signed the Sedition Act of 1798—a law effectively making criticism of the government illegal—one person called Adams the “new Muhammad,” meaning that he was a true tyrant.

The association of Islam and Muslims with tyranny in this period of U.S. history was furthered by conflicts with North African Muslim states. The United States’ first foreign war was fought with the North African principality of Tripoli from 1801 to 1805. After the 1783 Treaty of Paris granted the United States independence from Great Britain, U.S.-flagged ships no longer enjoyed safe passage granted to British ships in the Mediterranean by the North African states of Algiers, Morocco, Tunis, and Tripoli. After several ships were taken captive by Algiers in 1785, the cash-strapped U.S. government attempted to negotiate with the dey of Algiers and raise the necessary funds to secure the release of the captives. But in 1801, newly elected President Thomas Jefferson, who had long disagreed with the policy of paying tribute, decided instead to wage war. Though the new U.S. Navy largely dominated the seas during the conflict, U.S. sailors on the U.S.S. *Philadelphia* were taken prisoner in 1803. The war continued until 1805, when the parties signed a treaty releasing the captives in exchange for \$60,000 in ransom.

Many Americans, whether they were Democratic Republicans, Federalists, or of some other political persuasion, believed that Islamic religion was at fault for the behavior of the North Africans. The sailors’ captivity—this fundamental denial of their liberty—was a result, it was said, of Islamic despotism. Islamic religion was blamed for bad government, social backwardness, ignorance, indolence, and unrestrained passion.

Though the linking of Islam and North African Muslims with bondage was a view entertained by the vast majority of Americans, there were a few dissenters. Exceptional writings such as Royall Tyler’s *Algerine Captive* (1797) and the anonymously written *Humanity in Algiers* (1801) pointed out the hypocrisy of American views toward Muslims: How could one see the captivity of hundreds of hostages in North Africa as a travesty, they asked, while simultaneously allowing the enslavement of almost a million black people in the United States? In these novels, Muslims become the voice of generosity, freedom, and salvation. Such captivity narratives, especially James Riley’s *Authentic Narrative of the Loss of the American Brig Commerce* (1817), would eventually play a larger role in the antislavery movement in the United States. When asked what books had most influenced him, for example, President Abraham Lincoln named six; one of them was Riley’s novel, a story of how the captive and the man who once held him in captivity were able to achieve redemption.

### NINETEENTH-CENTURY AND EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY INNOVATIONS

In the 1800s, the themes that had characterized stereotyping of Muslims and Islam in the colonial and revolutionary eras of American history remained potent. The Second Great Awakening, a period of religious REVIVALISM that occurred in the first half of the 19th century, led to an even greater proliferation of prophecy teachings about Muslims and Islam. A widespread belief that the world would come to an end in 1844, for example, prominently featured observations about the imminent decline of the Ottoman (Muslim) Empire. Muslim societies continued to be viewed in terms of iniquity.

But as Muslim lands were eclipsed first by European economic power and then by direct European imperialism, older stereotypes of the Muslim as powerful tyrant—though still in existence—gave way to a more complicated and ambiguous set of stereotypes about Muslims and Islam. In the slaveholding South, for example, a deep interest in ethnology, the study of people's racial and ethnic origins, led to the white "discovery" of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES. Impressed, if not befuddled, by the high levels of ARABIC literacy and education among slaves such as ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA (ca. 1762–1829) and OMAR IBN SAID (ca. 1770–1864), slave owners, journalists, Christian missionaries, and politicians insisted that such men were not wholly African but of mixed black and Arab, Moorish, or Turkish ancestry.

Since slaveholding was based at least partly on the widespread belief among Anglo Americans in the intellectual inferiority of black people, it was believed that such slaves could not possibly be "pure Africans." At the same time, some slave owners specifically sought Muslim or "Mandingo" slaves, whom they believed would make excellent overseers of other slaves due to their relatively higher intelligence. There is some evidence that Muslim slaves such as BILALI OF SAPELO ISLAND emphasized their Muslim identities so that they might take advantage of the privileges offered to overseers of slave gangs in places such as the GEORGIA SEACOAST.

The idea that Muslims possessed a certain level of civilization challenged the widely held notion in the revolutionary era that Islamic religion made people backward and slothful. This was one of several ambiguous images that appeared in the 19th-century American catalog of stereotypes about Muslims. Another image (if not entirely new) that gained currency in the 19th century was the association of Muslims with sexual licentiousness. In Anglo-American male culture, for example, the Turkish harem became a place of sexual fantasy. As depicted in European and American paintings, the Muslim harem was a seductive space where men could dominate women.

This rendering of the harem as a whorehouse had little to do with the reality of Middle Eastern women who happened to live in such domestic spaces but became attractive to the many Anglo-American men who traveled to the Middle East as tourists in search of such titillation and sensuous experience, sometimes literally wearing the clothes of a Turkish pasha as a way of acting out their fantasies. Called "howadjis," a play on the Arabic word *hajji*, or pilgrim, these white American men included figures such as Bayard Taylor, author of *Poems of the Orient* (1854), who was painted proudly wearing a turban and smoking a water pipe. "The howadji," wrote Timothy Marr in *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism* (2008), set out to experience "such Eastern pleasures as dressing in loose oriental garb, smoking Turkish pipes, visiting public baths and slave markets, touring ruins from biblical times, and tenting with Bedouins and camels."

In the middle and latter parts of the 19th century, stereotypes of Muslims and Islam became more playful for the Anglo Americans who created such images. There was no better institutional example of this playfulness than the Shriners, a male fraternal organization founded in the late 1870s by New York actor William Florence that utilized Muslim texts, artistic symbols, clothes, and aspects of SUFISM, tracing their lineage to the prophet Muhammad and ancient Egyptian empires. Known for their conical headgear—called the fez—the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, or Shriners, held secret fraternal meetings, built large and ornate lodges named after Muslim historical figures such as Abu Bakr, and marched—fully dressed in their "oriental" garb—in the nation's various summertime parades.

By the early 20th century, the Muslim Orient—that is, the places in Africa and Asia where Muslims lived as majority populations—might be depicted, simultaneously, as violent, misogynistic, evil, pathetic, and even funny. This complicated storehouse of stereotypes was used as a source of inspiration for American literature, poetry, and especially FILM. Various images of the Muslim Orient were favorite topics of the silent movies that appeared in the 1920s, and none was more popular than *The Sheik* (1921), a tale of seduction in which a British woman was abducted by an Arab *shaykh*, or leader, and despite her efforts, gave in to his irresistible charms.

Consumer culture was similarly saturated with images of the Muslim Orient, often used to sell a product that was sensuous or even miraculous. Cigarette makers, for example, marketed a number of brands that incorporated images of Muslims or Islam, including Camel, Mecca, Fatima, and Omar. Members of the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America in the late 1920s sold Moorish Mineral and Healing Oil, and Moorish Body Builder and Blood Purifier, a tonic



for “rheumatism, lung trouble, rundown constitutions, indigestion, and loss of manhood.”

#### FROM THE IMAGINATIVE PLAYGROUND TO COLD WAR BATTLEGROUND

The development of the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union after 1945, the year in which WORLD WAR II ended, changed the social and cultural dynamics in which the more playful strain of Muslim stereotypes was embraced. After World War II, the United States emerged as the world’s preeminent economic and military power, locked in a cold war with the Soviet Union. In this period, the United States took unprecedented actions to ensure that countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, including many Muslim-majority countries, were led by governments that were friendly to U.S. political and economic interests.

The U.S. government sought to ensure the supply of oil from Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf to the United States and its allies, to support the fledgling state of Israel, to prevent the spread of communism, and to overthrow or minimize the power of leaders who opposed any part of this agenda. In 1953, for example, the U.S. government assisted in overthrowing Mohammad Mossadeq, the democratically elected prime minister of Iran who had nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. In his place, the U.S. and British governments supported the shah of Iran, a pro-Western monarch.

Growing numbers of people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America—from Vietnamese to Egyptians—hoped to pursue their own national interests, often calling for a “third way” between U.S.-backed capitalism and Soviet-supported communism. These “third way” or “third world” countries entered both formal and informal alliances in the 1950s and 1960s in order to support each other’s bids for national self-determination. The attempt to achieve national independence became the most popular method for social or ethnic groups, especially ethnic minorities, to express hopes for personal liberty and social justice.

During this era, some revolutionaries who had no state or territory of their own or wished to expand their territorial homelands used violence as a way to achieve their goals. Activists in Northern Ireland, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Israel, and other places committed violent acts against civilians to further their respective bids for national self-determination. In the United States and in other countries, such people were generally thought of as terrorists. Though nation-states frequently killed civilians in the course of waging war or in maintaining domestic peace, this use of violence was generally more acceptable according to both international law experts and popular American opinion.

In this age of nationalist terrorism, Muslims and Islam were not yet synonymous in American culture with terrorism. Through the 1970s, Americans were more likely

to associate terrorism with Arabs, especially Palestinians, than with Muslims more generally. In 1972, for example, Black September, a Palestinian terrorist group, kidnapped and murdered 11 Israeli athletes at the Summer Olympics in Munich, West Germany. Though Muslims were part of the Black September group, its actions were not understood to be those of an Islamic group, but of an Arab group seeking national independence for Palestinians. It was often “the Arab” rather than “the Muslim” who was stereotyped as the violent, fanatical, and uncivilized “bad guy” of American political cartoons, movies, and TV shows during the 1970s.

#### REEMERGENCE OF THE “MUSLIM ENEMY” BEFORE AND AFTER 9/11

By the end of the 20th century, however, an important shift had occurred in the stereotyping of Muslims and Islam that cast them in American culture as central villains in both fictional and nonfictional struggles against tyranny, oppression, and senseless violence. Islam and Muslims in the American popular imagination and in U.S. foreign policy came to be understood primarily not as labels for a religion and a religious group of people but as symbols of incomprehensible and evil terror. Terrorism and Islam became synonymous in the minds of millions of Americans.

This change reflected the politics of an era in which the U.S. government emerged victorious in its cold war with the Soviet Union and at the same time realized the limits of its power to control the fate of other nations, especially in the developing world. In the early 1970s, the U.S. government decided to end its prosecution of the VIETNAM WAR and, in 1975, withdrew its last troops from the U.S. embassy in Saigon. The sting of failure in Vietnam was still fresh in Americans’ minds when, amid the Iranian Revolution in 1979, several sectors of Iranian society joined together to oust the U.S.-backed shah, and the Islamic groups leading this anti-shah coalition took 52 Americans hostage for a total of 444 days.

This event and its fallout marked an important turning point in the history of stereotyping of Muslims and Islam in the United States. Some Americans mistakenly thought of Iranians, most of whom are of Persian ethnicity, as Arabs, but the Islamic nature of Iran’s revolution soon emerged as the key identifier of these hostage takers. U.S. citizens were angry, and the Iranian hostage crisis emerged as a daily concern for millions of them.

CBS News anchor Walter Cronkite, rated by one poll in 1979 to be the most trusted man in America, signed off each evening news broadcast by informing viewers how many days the hostages had been held in captivity, and Ted Koppel, host of ABC News’ *Nightline* program, brought the story into Americans’ homes each night, making many feel as if they, too, had been taken hostage. Harkening back to colonial-



With the rise of anti-Muslim attitudes in the United States after the end of the cold war, Muslims and their allies protested against the increased stereotyping of them as terrorists. (Les Stone/Sygma/Corbis)

and revolutionary-era captivity narratives about the Barbary pirates, many Americans felt vulnerable, even helpless, especially when a 1980 U.S. military rescue operation failed to rescue the hostages and instead resulted in the deaths of eight members of the military.

Though the hostages were safely released on January 20, 1981, the same day that Ronald Reagan was inaugurated as U.S. president, the damage on the American psyche had been profound. In analyzing the Iranian revolution, many U.S. foreign policy makers and analysts began to discuss the Iranian revolution not as a reaction to U.S. policy in Iran so much as an example of what they considered to be a new trend: the emergence of Muslim militant groups bent on opposing the United States and its allies for religious reasons.

In one sense, these analysts were right to fear an increasing threat to U.S. power emanating from groups that based their political platform on Islamic ideas. In this era of reli-

gious revivalism, many in Muslim-majority countries articulated their deepest hopes in terms that resonated with Islamic ideas and symbols. In addition, many political parties and activist groups organized around Islamic themes and institutions, often because they lived in politically repressive countries where the government did not allow for freedom of assembly, association, or speech in other venues.

Religious organizations and religious sites were among the last places where people could congregate and by default provided a space for political protest. In the Arab world, for example, where the nationalist rhetoric of Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser failed to deliver a promised victory over the Israelis in the 1967 war or the development of a large middle class, many Egyptians felt that the renewal of their country depended upon a renewal of Islamic values. A minority of these people formed violent groups committed both to the overthrow of their own government and to military resistance against the United States and Israel, who were seen as imperial, occupying forces in the Middle East.

U.S. foreign policy analysts correctly feared and predicted the rise of terrorism as a technique that would be used increasingly by such radical groups. But their analysis degenerated into irrational fear when they associated all Muslims with terrorist organizations, which were relatively few in number. For some, fighting terrorism became synonymous with fighting Islamic religion and by extension every Muslim. For example, according to the 1987 best seller, *Terrorism: How the West Can Win*, edited by Israeli politician (and later Prime Minister) Benjamin Netanyahu, the “world of Islam” had invented terrorism in the Middle Ages and, even in the modern world, remained “medieval” in its outlook. In addition, the book claimed, Islam was, at its very heart, antidemocratic and intolerant of diversity. Ironically, such criticism of Islam and Muslims was itself medieval, having emerged as a product of the Crusades.

This stereotyping of Muslims as the enemy was reflected in popular culture as well. In many best-selling novels and popular films of the 1980s, the Iranian hostage crisis was rewritten with a more positive outcome for those concerned about the limits of U.S. power. For example, Ken Follett’s *On the Wings of Eagles* (1983), which became a best seller, was marketed as the story of an American rescue operation in Iran that actually worked. The book dramatically recounted the rescue operation led by billionaire H. Ross Perot to free two of his imprisoned business associates in Iran. Similarly, the movie *Delta Force* (1986) was the story of how an American commando and Vietnam veteran, played by Chuck Norris, rescued hostages aboard an airliner that had been hijacked by Muslim militants. The film ends with the bloodthirsty enactment of symbolic revenge against a hijacker by Norris and the happy reunion of hostages with members of their families.

After the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 and the Soviet Union formally came to an end in 1991, such stereotypes of “the Muslim as enemy” became even more prominent among U.S. foreign policy makers. Throughout the 1990s, Harvard professor and former National Security Council official Samuel P. Huntington popularized the thesis that conflict in the post-cold war era would occur along religious and cultural lines. Huntington argued that Islamic and other non-Western civilizations were fundamentally irreconcilable with Western civilization. In *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (1998), Huntington claimed that “the fundamental problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the superiority of their culture and are obsessed with the inferiority of their power.”

In one stroke of the pen, Huntington had stereotyped more than 1 billion Muslims—and hundreds of millions of non-Muslims—ignoring the diversity of languages, religious beliefs, ethnic backgrounds, political orientations, and social classes that characterized these populations. It was a pattern that would be repeated by many foreign policy analysts who chose, consciously or unconsciously, to discuss terrorism as a typically Muslim activity. Some analysts warned that there was a vast and coordinated Islamic conspiracy against U.S. interests and American citizens, an idea that either ignored or was ignorant of the facts that many of these Muslim groups had differing agendas and few organizational ties to one another, and some had worked with the United States against a common enemy in Afghanistan, where the U.S. government funded and armed Muslim resistance to the Soviet occupation throughout the 1980s.

When al-Qaeda attacked the United States on SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Americans had little but stereotypes available to answer questions about who the attackers were, why this particular group of Muslim radicals “hated us,” and why they had committed the murders of more than 2,700 innocent people. Even as non-Muslim Americans attempted to go beyond superficial and stereotypical understandings of Islam and Muslims, and as Muslim Americans made massive efforts to battle stereotyping, the weight of the previous two decades was difficult to shed. Though there were important movements toward mutual understanding and compassion, the immediate aftermath of 9/11 was characterized by a hardening of negative attitudes toward Muslims and Islam.

As Gottschalk and Greenberg’s *Islamophobia* has shown, the typical symbols of Islam already in the historical storehouse of American culture—from the veil to the scimitar, a curved sword—were used frequently after 9/11 not only to depict Muslims in a negative light but simultaneously to define Muslims as the exact opposite of Americans. These mirror images included the notion that Muslims were two-

faced or untrustworthy, while Americans were truthful; Muslims were medieval, while Americans were modern; and Muslims oppressed women, while Americans liberated them.

In addition, many post-9/11 stereotypes portrayed Americans as moderate and normal, while representing Muslims as extreme and exotic. In cartoons, film, and on television, Muslims were often represented as overly religious, while Americans achieved a balance between freedom of religion and the separation of church and state. Muslim men were seen as hypermasculine or effeminate, while Americans were properly masculine. Even on the spate of post-9/11 television shows that broached the issue of stereotyping and discrimination against Muslims, many shows concluded that such prejudice was justified. “The right to be racist and suspicious of Arab and Muslim Americans is affirmed” in these shows, asserted American-studies scholar Evelyn Alsultany, “and the government practices to profile racially, detain, deport, and terrorize Arabs and Muslims are accepted.”

Alsultany’s concerns about the potentially damaging nature of anti-Muslim stereotyping seemed to be echoed in many public opinion polls after 9/11. A 2004 poll conducted by Cornell University’s Media and Society Research Group, for example, found that 44 percent of Americans surveyed believed that the civil liberties of Muslim Americans should be curtailed, and 27 percent said that all Muslims should be required to register their whereabouts with federal authorities. A 2006 CBS News poll found that only 19 percent of respondents had a favorable impression of Islam, while 45 percent had an unfavorable impression. In 2007, 25 percent of those surveyed by *Newsweek* said that they supported the mass detentions of Muslim Americans in the event of another terrorist attack. Throughout the first decade of the 21st century, Muslim Americans feared that these attitudes would become even more widespread.

Muslim Americans fought such stereotyping through PHILANTHROPY, POLITICS, INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS, and other forms of civic engagement. They also fought it through comedy. Like many religious and ethnic minorities, Muslim-American comics began to make fun of the stereotypes by revealing their absurdity. For example, during his comedy routine, Azhar Usman, a South Asian American, criticized the fact that some Muslim countries still have monarchies rather than democratic forms of government. “Can you imagine living in a country where they choose the leader based on who his daddy was?” asked Usman, mocking not only Muslim monarchies but also the presidency of George W. Bush, son of the 41st president, George H. W. Bush.

In 2008, Usman, along with African-American comic Preacher Moss and Palestinian-American Mo Amer, turned



their 2004 comedy tour, "Allah Made Me Funny," into an independent movie, which opened on 14 movie screens across the United States. Similarly, several Muslim- and Arab-American comedians have created the "Axis of Evil Comedy Tour" (2006) and the "Arab American Comedy Tour" (2006). One of them, Ahmed Ahmed, appeared on the *Tonight Show* in 2008, talking about the discrimination faced by Muslim Americans after 9/11: "Right after September 11th, hate crimes against Middle Eastern people and Muslims went up over 1000 percent. You believe that?" he asked, incredulously. "Which still puts us in fourth place behind blacks, gays, and Jews." Waiting for the laughter and applause to subside, Ahmed asked, "So what do we have to do?" Continuing with his routine, he described his experiences flying after 9/11. "I always know who the air marshal is," he deadpanned. "It's always the guy holding the *People* magazine upside down looking right at me."

### CONCLUSION

Though Muslim Americans, like other American religious and ethnic minorities, have been vulnerable to negative stereotyping from the colonial era to the 21st century, such stereotyping is not inevitable. Instead, anti-Muslim stereotypes have been the product of complex historical processes that have revolved largely around U.S. interests in the Islamic world and Muslims abroad. Little attention has been paid to the fact that Muslims have contributed to the making of American society and culture since the colonial era, since the idea of a history that is simultaneously Muslim and American challenges basic notions of "us" and "them." Muslim Americans have had only modest success in altering negative stereotypes, but in their local communities, through their public affairs organizations, and on stage, they have attempted to blunt the force of negative and inaccurate images, sometimes by laughing at them.

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### Sufi Order of the West

The Sufi Order of the West, as an organization, developed from Indian Muslim INAYAT KHAN's vision of SUFISM for the western world. Though founded in 1912 in San Francisco as the "Sufi Order in America," the organization remained small after Khan left for a European tour the same year. It eventually developed several different branches in the United States, where, for almost a century, this pioneering organization has attempted to spread a peaceful, contemplative, and inclusive version of Islamic spiritual teachings.

Inayat Khan was born in India in 1882 to a family of musicians and first came to the United States in 1910 with his brother Maheboob and cousin Ali after first stopping in Europe. Another of Khan's brothers, Musherraff, joined them shortly thereafter. Inayat Khan left India under the auspices of his spiritual teacher, Muhammad Abu Hashim Madani, who entrusted him to spread the message of Sufism in the West. Though Inayat Khan was initiated into multiple Sufi orders in India, his primary affiliation was with the CHISHTI SUFI ORDER. The family of musicians made themselves known in the United States through lectures and musical performances, and Inayat Khan, the spiritual leader of the group, began to attract students. His first address in America was at Columbia University in NEW YORK CITY, where he was received with warmth and interest.



Though Inayat Khan came from a practicing Muslim family in India, he never required his students to become Muslims—nor, subsequently, did he require them to observe Islamic rituals such as the prescribed prayer or fasting during Ramadan. *Inayati* Sufism, or universal Sufism, has been largely characterized by an aversion to formal doctrine, emphasizing the idea that the religions of the world are ultimately united by underlying principles and that Sufism, in truth, seeks to point the aspirant toward that realization, rather than espouse a particular religion. Sufism, according to Inayat Khan, was not a religion. Since Khan was conversant with not only Sufism but also Hinduism and other religions, universal ideals permeated his teachings. *Inayati* Sufism necessarily evolved in relation to spiritual traditions of the world and placed great emphasis not only on their philosophical unity but also incorporated a ritual to commemorate the ideal. One of the order's primary practices, the universal worship service, has involved lighting candles dedicated to the world's religions, symbolizing their underlying unity. Lighting a single candle for unnamed religions has also been a part of the practice.

Most of these teachings were first broadcast to Europe, not America. According to Khan, however, the "time for the message was not yet ripe" for the spread of Sufism in the United States in 1910. He criticized American racism and the hustle and bustle of American life. In 1912, he appointed his student Rabia Martin as his representative in the United States and left for a European tour. Though he returned to America in the 1920s, and managed to commission another student, SAMUEL LEWIS (1896–1971), the movement remained much larger in Europe for the following four decades. During his career, Inayat Khan initiated perhaps 200 to 300 members into his organization, though thousands more were influenced by his teachings in the United States and Europe.

In the early 1960s, Inayat Khan's son, VILAYAT INAYAT KHAN (1916–2004) attempted to revive the remnants of the Sufi Order in America and find new persons sympathetic to his father's teachings. From 1968 to 1977 Vilayat Khan's Sufi Order of the West, which eventually became Sufi Order International, cooperated with the San Francisco–based SUFI RUHANIAT INTERNATIONAL group of Samuel Lewis, another Muslim-American Sufi who had once been taught by Inayat Khan.

In 1975, Vilayat Khan opened his own residential community and retreat center in New Lebanon, New York, called the Abode of the Message. This community, in tandem with centers in Seattle, Washington, and Sante Fe, New Mexico, often served as the headquarters of the American followers of Vilayat Khan. Perhaps as many as 100 centers affiliated with the teachings of Khan across the United States and Canada opened in the next two decades. The Omega Institute for

Holistic Studies, located in Rhinebeck, New York, published Sufi Order International's many books and pamphlets in this period.

According to the Sufi Order, 10,000 people in North America were initiated into the organization by Vilayat Inayat Khan. In 1997, the North American section of the Sufi Order International said that it had 1,200 dues-paying members and a total circulation for its quarterly magazine, *Hearts & Wings*, of approximately 3,000. Sufi Order's mailing list had 8,000 individuals by the end of the 20th century.

In 2004, the organization was formally taken over by Zia Inayat Khan (1971– ), the son of Vilayat Khan. Like his grandfather, Zia Khan has lived a spiritually eclectic life and studied Buddhism in addition to classical Chishti Sufism and its western adaptations. He has maintained, in line with his father and grandfather, that Sufism is ultimately beyond the limitations of religion and is instead a spiritual reality that is accessible to all, regardless of creed or affiliation. Zia Khan, moreover, has interacted with other American Sufi movements, including his participation in a conference in 2000 entitled the *Meeting of Five Shaykhs*, with Sheikh Hashim Kabban of the NAQSHBANDI SUFI ORDER and others.

Elliott Bazzano

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### Inayat Khan

#### "America, 1910–1912" (ca. 1925)

*Shortly before World War I, Indian musician and Sufi master Inayat Khan (1882–1927) toured the United States, performing South Asian music and lecturing about the spiritual side of Islam. In this passage from his memoirs, written around 1925, Khan expresses his admiration for Americans but criticizes them as racist and materialistic. His organization, the Sufi Order in the West, had its greatest initial success in Europe, though it would later grow and spread in the United States.*



I was transported by destiny from the world of lyric and poetry to the world of industry and commerce, on the 13th of September 1910. I bade farewell to my motherland, the soil of India, the land of the sun, for America the land of my future, wondering: "perhaps I shall return some day," and yet I did not know how long it would be before I should return. The ocean that I had to cross seemed to me a gulf between the life that was passed and the life which was to begin. I spent my moments on the ship looking at the rising and falling of the waves and realizing in this rise and fall the picture of life reflected, the life of individuals, of nations, of races, and of the world. I tried to think where I was going, why I was going, what I was going to do, what was in store for me. "How shall I set to work? Will the people be favorable or unfavorable to the Message which I am taking from one end of the world to the other?" It seemed my mind moved curiously on these questions, but my heart refused to ponder upon them even for a moment, answering apart one constant voice I always heard coming from within, urging me constantly onward to my task, saying: "Thou art sent on Our service, and it is We Who will make thy way clear." This alone was my consolation. . . .

Now before me there was the question: how to set to work and in what direction? For the Message the time was not yet ripe, as I was at that time rather studying the psychology of the people than teaching. . . .

My first address to the people of America was arranged at Columbia University in New York by Dr. Reebner, and there I found a great response. Dr. Reebner, the Head of Music at the University was most interested in Indian music and we became friends. Among the audience was Miss Ruth St. Denis who invented Indian dances of her own and was making a speciality of it, and for whom our music became as a color and fragrance to an imitation flower. She tried to introduce the Indian music on the program of her performance, which was to me as a means to an end. We had an interesting tour together throughout the States, and yet for the public, which was for amusement, our music became merely an entertainment. This was an amusement for them, and therefore painful for us. Also it was not satisfactory to combine

real with imitation. However it helped to keep the wolf away from our door. . . .

Before ending our tour in the States I spoke at the University of Los Angeles, and to a very large audience at the Berkeley University of San Francisco where I met with a very great response, and where my lectures on, and my representation of Indian music and the presentation of its ideal met with a great interest.

At the end of my tour through the United States, when I arrived at San Francisco, I found the meaning of the scheme of Providence, that I was meant to come to San Francisco, a land full of psychic powers and cosmic currents, and begin from there the work of my Message. It is here that I found my first *mureed* [student] Mrs. Ada Martin. I was welcomed by Swami Trigunatita and his collaborator Swami Paramananda, who requested me to speak on Indian music to their friends at the Hindu temple, and was presented with a gold medal and an address. . . .

During my stay in America for more than two years there was not much done in the furtherance of the Sufi Movement. From my stay in America I began to learn the psychology of the people in the West and the way in which my mission should be set to work. If I can recall any great achievement in America, it was to have found the soul who was destined to be my life's partner.

With the liberal idea of freedom in all directions of life and in spite of Abraham Lincoln's liberal example and reform, there is still to be found in America a prejudice against color which is particularly shown to the Negroes who were for a long time in slavery, and since their freedom the prejudice has become still greater. It seems almost impossible to think that in a country which is most up-to-date in civilization, there should be a population so looked down upon. Yes, in India there are *shudras*, lower castes who are called untouchable. Yet there have been scientific reasons, from a hygienic point of view, for not touching them, and the attitude of the high caste towards them has never been that of hatred. The men and women of that pariah class in India are called by others *mehter*, which means master. Yes, the people in America have their reason for it. They think Negroes are too backward in evolution to associate with. But to me it seems that the coming race will be the race of Negroes; they are showing it from now. In whatever walk of life they find an opportunity, they come forward in

competition. Not only in wrestling or boxing, but also on the stage the Negroes show their splendor, and the most surprising thing to me was that, conscious of all the prejudice against the Negro from all around, he does not allow his ego to be affected by it. In every position of outward humiliation he is put to, he stands upright with a marvelous spirit, which I only wished the man in the East had, who has become as a soil worn-out after a thousand harvests. The spirit in the East seemed to me deadened, being weighed down by autocratic influences, tramped upon by foreign powers, crucified by high moral and spiritual ideals, and long starved by poverty.

An ordinary man in America confuses an Indian with brown skin with the Negro. Even if he does not think that he is a Negro, still he is accustomed to look with contempt at a dark skin, in spite of the many most unclean, ignorant and ill-mannered specimens of white people who are to be found there on the spot. I did not find so much prejudice existing in America against a Japanese, of which so much has been said. Still in answer to the unchristian attitude of theirs, the government of Japan has all along threatened them with the Mosaic law, and is ready to return the same when the Americans visit Japan. Indians, when insulted abroad, can do nothing but bear it patiently. The color prejudice in some nations of Europe is even more, but it is often hidden under the garb of politeness and not so freely expressed as in America; the difference is between a grown-up person and a child in his expression of prejudice.

An American as a friend is very agreeable and desirable and most sociable. One feels affection, spontaneity in his feelings, although the business faculty is most pronounced in him, yet together with it he is most generous. The American readily responds to the idea of universal brotherhood. He is open to study any religion or philosophy, although it is a question if he would like to follow a certain religion long enough, because freedom, which is the goal, by many in America is taken as the way, and therefore, before starting the journey towards spiritual freedom, they want the way also to be a way of freedom, which is impossible. I have seen among Americans people of a thorough good nature and their life itself a religion, people of principle and gentleness. The broad outlook of the people in America gave me a great hope and

a faith that it is this spirit which in time must bring the universal idea to the view of the world. It is most admirable for a great nation to bring forward the idea of world disarmament, when many other nations are fully absorbed in covetousness, and submerged in their own interests. This idea of disarmament brought out by President Harding, was responded to by the public there. This shows the bent of their mind. Besides, to friends or enemies, in their trouble, whenever the occasion has arisen, America has most generously come first to their rescue.

With all the modern spirit in America I found among the people love for knowledge, search for truth, and tendency to unity. I found them full of life, enthusiasm, and goodwill, which promises that this modern nation, although it is now in its childhood, will become a youth who will lead the world towards progress.



Source: Hazrat Inayat Khan. "America, 1910–1912." Available online. URL: [http://wahiduddin.net/mv2/bio/Autobiography\\_1.htm](http://wahiduddin.net/mv2/bio/Autobiography_1.htm). Accessed August 23, 2006.

### Sufi Ruhaniat International

The Sufi Ruhaniat International (SRI) was founded in 1971 shortly before the death of its founder, SAMUEL LEWIS (1896–1971), who was also known as Murshid Sam and Sufi Sam (an acronym for Sufi Ahmad Murad). SRI formed as a splinter group of followers of INAYAT KHAN (1882–1927), a Muslim Indian mystic who first visited the United States in 1910. Initially called the Sufi Islamia Ruhaniat Society, the organization officially changed to SRI in 2002, eliminating the word Islamia from its title because the order did not mandate adherence to Sunni and Shi'a practices. Still, an increasing number of SRI's members in the 21st century came to consider themselves Muslim. Since the organization's beginnings, members of SRI have represented a wide range of religious traditions, and relinquishing those affiliations has not been a prerequisite for membership.

In 1923, Samuel Lewis received initiation into Inayat Khan's order and went on to propagate Khan's message, which included writing commentaries on his work and developing a form of spiritual dance. Lewis was also deeply influenced by Ruth St. Denis (1879–1968), a pioneer of the modern dance movement in America and Europe. Following Inayat Khan's death in 1927, the question of spiritual succession was contested among Khan's students and family, marking the first steps in splinter groups of *Inayati*, or uni-

versal, Sufism. In part because of his eclecticism and inclusive worldview, Lewis represented one of the forerunners of the New Age movement, which developed more succinctly in the late 1970s.

Spiritual walks and dances have primarily characterized SRI, though other branches of *Inayati* Sufism have also practiced the dances. The first dances began in the late 1960s and were known as “Dervish Dances,” involving the repetition of sacred ARABIC phrases. The next forms were called “Mantric Dances” and usually involved Sanskrit phrases, taken from Yogic and Buddhist traditions. The conglomeration of these dances became known as the Dances of Universal Peace, or Sufi Dancing. They have since been practiced across the United States and in other countries as well. In 1972, the Sufi Islamia Ruhaniat Society published “Introduction to Spiritual Walk and Dance,” a pamphlet that outlined the philosophy of the dances in addition to some of their particular forms.

Thousands of dances have been developed since their onset, and SRI has encouraged their transmission from teachers to students, rather than learning them individually. According to Lewis, the purpose of the dances was both for moral development and spiritual purification. Lewis said he created the dances to show young people how to deepen their spirituality and as a way to help them find bliss without the use of drugs. While Lewis and Inayat Khan’s son, VILAYAT INAYAT KHAN (1916–2004), worked together for some time, one of the reasons Lewis separated from Vilayat’s group was due to the latter’s prohibition against drugs. While Lewis never advocated drug use, he was not comfortable setting a formal doctrine against it. Weariness of overly doctrinal stances has been characteristic of *Inayati* Sufism in general. Inayat Khan emphasized that SUFISM was not a religion, and one member of SRI who has resided in Arcata, California, put it this way: “The religion of the heart can’t be claimed exclusively by any religion, but it can be claimed by all religions.”

Upon the death of Samuel Lewis in 1971, Moineddin Jablonski assumed leadership of the SRI until he died in 2001. Shabda Khan became the next spiritual successor. In a similar light to Lewis, Shabda Khan has had eclectic training, having studied with a Tibetan Buddhist and Hindu teacher prior to his leadership role in SRI. As of 2009, he has remained the head of the organization. SRI has continued to grow, and by 2008, its U.S. membership had reached 1,317 and its international membership—comprised of 33 countries—1,708 members.

Elliott Bazzano

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### Sufism

Sufism is the mystical or inner dimension of the Islamic tradition. For most Muslims, it provides a path to a closer and more intimate relationship with God. While some Muslims have rejected Sufism as un-Islamic, the historical development and spread of Islamic religion throughout Africa, Europe, and Asia was often due to the success of Sufi leaders and institutions. Sufis have been credited with major roles in bringing Islamic teachings to regions such as South and Southeast Asia, where they learned the local languages and conveyed Islamic and mystical teachings through vernacular poetry. In these various regions, Sufi practices often took on the local color, incorporating musical performance in the case of the Indian Chishti Order or engaging in shamanistic feats among certain Central Asian groups.

Sufi Muslims claim to derive their practices and concepts from the fundamental Islamic sources, the QUR’AN and Sunna, the practice of the prophet Muhammad. In addition to performing the five daily prayers and observing other elements of Sunni Islam, Sufis often focus their religious practice on directly experiencing the presence of God through the use of meditation. Called *DHIKR*, or the remembrance of God, this meditation can take several forms. Sufis may recite the names of God over and over, or proclaim God’s greatness. They may also dance, sing, or recite religious poetry in their effort to experience God’s presence. Some practitioners attempt to be absorbed entirely in God’s love, seeking annihilation in the Divine.





Sufi dancers, New Mexico, 1974. Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam, increased in popularity during the 1970s as many Jewish and Christian Americans experimented with new forms of spiritual practice. (Jeff Albertson/CORBIS)

Fundamental to the history of Sufism has been the role of the Sufi teacher, called the *shaykh* in the Arabic language or the *pir* in the Persian language. Traditionally, the Sufi student or disciple took allegiance to this teacher and was to obey him or her unquestioningly. Initiates in spiritual lineages were said to be following a *tariqa* (a way or a method), which crystallized into specific sets of religious practices within the various Sufi orders. Many of these orders were named after prominent Sufi saints of the past who were credited with formulating specific litanies and ritual practices. Some Sufi movements, such as the QADIRI-RIFA'I SUFİ ORDER, named for 12th-century teacher Abd al-Qadir Jilani, became diffused worldwide, while others had more local reach.

#### SUFISM IN THE UNITED STATES

The introduction of Sufism to America as a lived religious practice may have occurred through what appear to be Sufi-inspired practices among West African slaves along the Georgia coast. Using long strings of prayer beads, or rosaries, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVES may have recited vari-

ous litanies that they learned as students of Sufism. White Americans, however, took little notice of Sufism until the late 19th century, when middle- and upper-class individuals became attracted to Sufi philosophy as an alternative to Christian thought and practice. In 1893, Islam's most prominent American missionary of the time, ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB, appeared at the Chicago World's Fair, where he extolled Islam's virtues as a rational and scientific religion as part of the World's Parliament of Religions. In his writings on Islam, Webb stressed that Islam contained practical, concrete religious elements as well as more spiritual, esoteric religious elements.

The first documented Sufi teacher to come to the United States was INAYAT KHAN (1882–1927), who arrived from what was then British India in 1910 while on tour as a Hindustani musician. After declaring in 1912 that the United States was “not yet ripe” for the Sufi message, Khan moved to Europe. He later returned to the United States for a short period of time in the 1920s. Eventually, a group of followers successfully established his teachings in the SUFI ORDER OF THE WEST, which combined Khan's training in the India-

based CHISHTI SUFI ORDER, with broader practices drawn from other religions.

The development of Sufi institutions in the United States remained limited, however, until after WORLD WAR II. In 1953, Albanian Muslim Americans established a BEKTASHI SUFI lodge in Michigan. Then, the countercultural movements of the 1960s and concomitant interest in Eastern spirituality brought renewed interest in Inayat Khan's teachings. His son, VILAYAT INAYAT KHAN, revived the movement in the 1960s under the names "Sufi Order in the West" or the "Message in Our Time." In 1975, Vilayat Khan established a center known as the Abode of the Message in New Lebanon, New York. The organization later adopted the name Sufi Order International, reflecting the more transnational currents of the time. Inayat Khan's grandson, Zia Inayat Khan, was invested with the succession of the order in 2000 and has since been conducting teachings based at the Abode.

#### DIVERSITY IN AMERICAN SUFISM

In the United States, various Sufi movements emerged in the late 20th century. One strand of movements, more universalistic in outlook, invoked Sufism and some aspects of Muslim tradition but did not demand formal conversion to Islam of its adherents. For example, Samuel Lewis was an early student of Inayat Khan who also followed Zen and Yogic paths and teachers. His brand of Sufism was transmitted to a smaller circle of disciples in San Francisco during the 1960s. He developed, in particular, practices of "spiritual" movement and "Sufi dancing," utilizing circle and round dances in group settings accompanied by the chanting of litanies drawn from various religious traditions, including the Islamic profession of faith. The disciples that "Sufi Sam," as Lewis was nicknamed, passed on to Vilayat Khan infused the latter's group with new leadership and energy in the early 1970s. Many disciples chose to remain within a distinct group called the Sufi Islamia Ruhaniat Society, whose name was changed in 2002 to SUFI RUHANIAT INTERNATIONAL. Another legacy of Samuel Lewis is an international movement practicing the Dances of Universal Peace.

Other Sufi orders, while largely recruiting among Americans, had a grounding in the Islamic SHARI'A, or Islamic law and ethics, and understood being Muslim as essential to spiritual progress within the Sufi tradition. Most of the leaders of these movements have been immigrants from Muslim societies. Notable among these have been the NAQSHBANDI SUFI ORDER led by the Cypriot *shaykh*, Nazim. This group has been directed in the United States by Sheikh MUHAMMAD HISHAM KABBANI. Other groups included the Turkish Helveti Jerrahi Order brought by Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak in 1980 and the BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN FELLOWSHIP established by a Sinhalese teacher, Muhammad Raheem

Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, and several branches of the Turkish MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER under Kabir Helminski or Jalaluddin Loras.

College and university professors associated with American Sufi movements, such as Huston Smith and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, have advocated the pursuit of a perennial truth and sympathetically presented Islamic teachings in the light of inner or mystical understandings. FRITHJOF SCHUON, a Swiss professor who ultimately settled in Bloomington, Indiana, was also influential in disseminating this "perennialist" or "traditionalist" understanding of Sufism. At the same time, he functioned as the head of the MARYAMIYYA SUFI ORDER, a branch of the SHADHILI SUFI ORDER, a movement popular in North Africa and the Arab Middle East.

American Sufi movements have included pockets of immigrants from Muslim societies, particularly found in larger urban centers such as NEW YORK CITY, CHICAGO, and LOS ANGELES, who follow Sufism in ways very similar to practices in their home societies. In the case of the West African Sufi orders such as the Murudiyya and the Tijaniyya, African immigrants have welcomed African-American Muslims into their Sufi meditation centers and mosques. Some African-American Muslims, drawn to West African Sufism for both spiritual and ethnic reasons, have developed transatlantic ties to Sufi teachers, institutions, and shrines in West Africa. The African American Islamic Institute in Kaolack, Senegal, for example, is home to black American Muslims studying under the guidance of Sheikh Hassan Cisse. In addition to the study of Islamic texts and ritual practices, practitioners contribute time and money to social services and a Qur'an school for children in the town of Kaolack.

The constituencies and membership of the various American Sufi movements have varied, since they represent diverse religious and social orientations. The Sufi Order of the West and the Idries Shah Movement have had a broader impact on mainstream American popular culture due to their publishing activities and outreach to broader communities through interests such as transpersonal psychology, holistic health, and Sufi dancing. Members did not have to make radical lifestyle or social adjustments and have tended to be white, middle- and upper-class spiritual seekers. Interest in these movements may have peaked in the mid-1970s. While the Sufi Order International has claimed that 10,000 persons took an initiation with Vilayat Khan, many more Americans had contact with its teachings through attending Sufi seminars and camps or reading publications.

#### SUFISM AND AMERICAN CULTURE

By the late 20th century, Sufi ideas and practices made a significant impact on American popular culture. Americans listened to Sufi musician Nusrat Fateh Khan's collaboration

with rocker Eddie Vedder on the soundtrack to Sean Penn's film *Dead Man Walking*. Coleman Barks's translations of Jalaluddin Rumi, the medieval Sufi poet, became best sellers. Television and audio cassette evocations of Rumi's work were also promoted by celebrities such as the singer Madonna and the guru of holistic health Deepak Chopra.

In the case of the Islamic-American Sufi movements, impact on mainstream American culture has been less significant since the ideas propounded are more specific to Muslim concerns. Since some Sufi interpretations of Islam, such as the idea of charismatic leadership and the intercession of pious saints, were not accepted by all Muslims, it should not be thought that such movements have been supported by the entire Muslim American community. At the same time, many non-Sufi Muslims have appreciated the success of Sufi movements in drawing Americans to Islam. Beginning in the late 1990s, a strand of Sufism heavily grounded in traditional Islamic learning began to achieve popularity in the United States, especially among the generation of Muslims born to immigrant Muslim parents from South Asia or the Middle East. Teachers such as Hamza Yusuf Hanson (1960– ) and Nuh Ha Mim Keller (1954– ), both Euro-American converts to Islam, have attracted followers who espoused Islamic spirituality through meticulous practice of the norms of Islamic law. This type of renewed Islamic Sufism has also proved more broadly acceptable in the major Islamic-American organizations.

Sufism is practiced in both the Shi'a and Sunni branches of Islam and a number of Shi'a orders, including the NIMATULLAHI SUFI ORDER and the Oveyssi-Shahmaghsoudi, have developed followings among both the Iranian émigré and the American community. The son of Shah Maghsoud, Saleheddin Ali Nader Angha, heads an organization known as the MTO (Maktab Tarighat Oveyssi) or the Shahmaghsoudi School of Islamic Sufism, which claimed more than 39 centers in North America in 2008. Women have had a high degree of leadership within this movement, running a number of the local centers, giving lessons and teaching Sufi practices.

In many ways, the varieties of Sufi movements, ideas, and traditions in the United States express the diversity of Muslim-American communities and individuals as a whole. Sufi Muslim Americans hold differing ideas about how to develop a closer relationship with God, and they practice different rituals in their attempt to experience God's presence. Some Sufi groups do not seek ties to non-Sufi Muslims; others see themselves as part of a worldwide community of Muslim believers, whether Sufi or not. Sufi Muslims sometimes cross racial and ethnic lines; other times, they seek to strengthen such communal ties. Some Americans, who think of themselves as Sufis and may care little for other aspects of Islam, are simply lovers of Rumi's

poetry. There is no one kind of Sufi, just as there is no one kind of Muslim.

Marcia Hermansen

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**sunna** See ISLAMIC THOUGHT; RELIGIOUS LIFE; SHARI'AH; SUNNI MUSLIM AMERICANS.

### Sunni Muslim Americans

Sunni Muslims constitute the majority of Muslims worldwide, accounting for approximately 80 to 85 percent of the global Muslim population. They trace their origins to a seventh-century dispute over the question of who was best qualified to lead the Muslim community after the death of the prophet MUHAMMAD in 632 C.E. While Shi'a Muslims believed that only members of the family of the prophet Muhammad should lead the community, Sunni Muslims rejected this view and supported the ascension of Abu Bakr, a companion of Muhammad but not a relative, as the first caliph, or vice-regent, of the Muslim community.

While today's Sunni Muslims locate the origins of their communal identities in the seventh century, the term "Sunni," which simply means "traditional," was not used widely until the eighth century. Employed at first to merely emphasize continuity with the practices of the Prophet and his companions, "Sunni" has taken on additional meanings since the classical age of Islam. For some Muslims, Sunni



Islam came to be distinguished from *SUFISM*, or the mystical tradition of Islam; for others, including the great 11th to 12th century Islamic legal scholar and mystic al-Ghazali, the heart of Sunni Islam was Sufi Islam. Some came to define Sunni to mean those Muslims who not only follow the *QUR'AN* and the *sunna*, or traditions of the Prophet, but also the *SHARI'AH*, the body of Islamic law and ethics developed by Islamic scholars; others have eschewed the legal tradition or de-emphasized it.

Sunni Muslims in the United States have accounted for the majority of the Muslim-American population since slave times. They have been diverse in every way—from their country of origin to their language, their socioeconomic status, their race or ethnicity, and even in their interpretation of Islamic religion. But they have shared certain religious practices throughout American history. From the time of slavery until today, Sunni Muslims have committed themselves to upholding traditions such as the practice of daily prayers; the recitation of the *Qur'an*, the holy scripture; the giving of charity; the observance of dietary guidelines; and fasting during Ramadan.

#### AFRICAN SLAVES

The Sunni Muslim presence in the Americas can be traced to the colonial era. Sunni Muslim slaves were taken against their will from West Africa, stretching from present-day Senegal to Nigeria, where, by the 17th and 18th centuries, Sunni Islam was already established. In some of those regions, Sunni Muslims were a majority, while in others they were a minority ruled by non-Muslim leaders. It has been estimated that almost 30,000 Sunni Muslim slaves were transported to America, representing 10 percent of all the West Africans who arrived in the Thirteen Colonies and United States from 1711 to 1808, the year the U.S. government banned the importation of slaves.

Most of the Sunni Muslim Africans were young men and women whose ages ranged between 18 and 30 years. Many came from the urban-ruling elite of West Africa, and some of them were highly educated. A considerable number of them were *Qur'anic* teachers and students who had received Islamic education in the centers of learning. Likewise, some other Sunni Muslim slaves were clerics, traders, and noble people. A few were from the ruling dynasties in their countries—persons such as *ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA*, who was abducted in 1788. Sunni Muslim slaves found America a hostile environment for the practice of their religion. White owners and Christian missionaries expressed a desire to wipe out any trace of “Muhammadanism,” or Islamic religion, in the slaves. Some were forced to convert to Christianity.

Despite the challenge of being Muslim in America, however, some Sunni slaves in the 18th and 19th centuries managed to maintain ties to their faith. *JOB BEN SOLOMON*

(1701–73) risked his personal safety to prostrate himself in daily prayer toward Mecca, and he refused to eat pork or drink liquor, following the Islamic prohibition against their consumption. Slaves such as *OMAR IBN SAID* (ca. 1770–1864) practiced the rituals of their faith secretly, writing chapters of the *Qur'an* in *ARABIC* on the paper provided by the Christian missionaries attempting to convert them. Some Muslim slaves kept up Islamic traditions of *PHILANTHROPY* through the sharing of *FOOD* with their fellow slaves.

#### IMMIGRANTS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

In the 1870s, but especially from 1890 to World War I, a new wave of immigrants from the Middle East, largely from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine, arrived in the United States. These immigrants were for the most part uneducated and came from rural areas. Perhaps 90 percent of them were Christian, but the Muslims who did come—most of them Sunni—worked as peddlers and dockworkers, and also in factories, mines, and railroad construction. They settled all over the country but were concentrated in cities and towns, including *DETROIT, MICHIGAN*; *CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA*; *NEW YORK CITY*; *TOLEDO, OHIO*; *BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS*; and, perhaps most surprisingly, *ROSS, NORTH DAKOTA*.

At first, many came with the hope to earn money and then return to their home countries. Toward the beginning of *WORLD WAR I* in 1914, however, an increasing number of these Sunni Muslim immigrants had settled for good in the United States. In addition to saying their daily prayers, some of the religiously observant among them fasted from dawn until sunset during the month of Ramadan. By the beginning of the 20th century, they began to rent halls where they could hold Friday congregational prayers or celebrate the birth of a child. They celebrated their major feasts such as *Eid al-Fitr*, marking the end of Ramadan, and *Eid al-Adha*, marking the end of the pilgrimage to Mecca. In Detroit, North Dakota, and other places, they purchased land where they could bury their dead in an Islamic fashion, placing the body directly in the ground, wrapped only in a simple white cloth.

During this same period, from 1880 to World War I, Sunni Muslims arrived from South Asia, including the modern-day countries of Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. Many of those from the South Asian region called the Punjab became agricultural workers in California, while sailors from the region called Bengal left their ships to settle in New Orleans and New York. Although many of them, especially the agricultural workers in California who married Mexican Catholic women, did not continue to practice Sunni Islam in America, others passed on their religious traditions to their children.



**AFTER WORLD WAR II**

After WORLD WAR II ended in 1945, Sunni Muslim immigrant communities in the United States established stronger links with their countries of origin. One tangible example of these ties was the building of the ISLAMIC CENTER OF WASHINGTON, D.C., completed in 1957, which was a cooperative venture between Muslim Americans and foreign Muslims. Financed by the governments of 14 Muslim countries, the Islamic Center played host to various imams, or religious leaders, from Egypt's al-Azhar University, one of the oldest and most prestigious Sunni Islamic educational institutions.

In 1952, Muslim Americans founded the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (FIA), which was later supported partly by Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser. The FIA arranged for the placement of various al-Azhar-trained imams in the growing number of mosques around the United States. Muslim-American immigrants, concerned that their children and grandchildren did not know the Qur'an, the sunna, and Islamic history, asked these imams to teach their children these basics in Islamic Sunday school sessions.

In 1963, foreign students at the University of Illinois, Urbana, established the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION, which sought to teach non-Muslims about Islam, provide a community for Muslims on college campuses, and relate the fundamentals of Islamic thought to American and modern life. The MSA also became the organization through which various foreign Muslim organizations and leaders promoted a reformist version of Islam that stressed Islam's rationality and its applicability in all realms of life, including politics. Applying their interpretations of the sunna to everyday life, some Sunni Muslim Americans espoused the idea that Islam was a whole way of life that gave instructions on everything from the proper relations between husbands and wives to how one should lead a movement for social change.

After the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 allowed many more nonwhite persons to immigrate to the United States, additional numbers of Sunni Muslims, especially from the Middle East and South Asia, came to the country. Many of them were highly educated, professional Muslims, who were willing to contribute substantial sums to the building of new MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS and schools. Other post-1965 Sunni Muslim immigrants were refugees seeking shelter from wars and conflicts in countries such as Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Somalia, and Palestine. For both the refugees and other immigrants, the practice of Sunni Islamic traditions often became an important part of their new American identities. Some Muslims became more pious and prayed, fasted, donated money, read the Qur'an, and performed other religious duties more fervently than they had in their home countries.

In the 1980s, the number of Sunni Muslims continued to increase due to the influx of new immigrants, including professionals and middle-class people, from sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Central Asia, Europe, and Southeast Asia, as well as South Asia and the Middle East. Muslim-American immigrants established various businesses meant to cater to the religious needs of the community, from providing Islamic DRESS to serving Islamic FOOD. Expressing one's Sunni Muslim identity came to include not only fasting, praying, giving charity, and going on pilgrimage but also expressing one's belief in God and the prophet Muhammad by placing a bumper sticker on one's car or reading Islamic magazines.

**INDIGENOUS SUNNI MUSLIMS**

Though the first prominent convert to Sunni Islam in the United States was likely ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB, a white diplomat and newspaperman who became Muslim in the late 19th century, most American converts to Sunni Islam were African Americans. At first, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS created their own Islamic movements such as the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, founded in Chicago in 1925. They also joined the non-Sunni Ahmadiyya movement in the 1920s. But by the late 1920s and 1930s, they were also becoming Sunni Muslims. The Islamic Mission of America in New York City and the First Mosque of Pittsburgh led the way.

Influenced at least in part by immigrant Sunni Muslim communities as well as Muslim visitors from Africa and Asia, these black Muslims prostrated their bodies in the direction of Mecca when they prayed. They altered their diets to exclude pork, met for Friday congregational prayers, and, in some cases, such as that of MUHAMMAD EZALDEEN, they began to travel abroad to study the Qur'an or other parts of Islamic tradition. They also began to dress in ways that marked themselves as Muslims. Some women wore a HIJAB, or head scarf, while men often donned a kufi or turban, male forms of head cover.

Despite the presence of Sunni Muslims in the African-American Muslim community, however, it is unlikely that most black Muslims were Sunni in the 1950s. In the years after World War II, the NATION OF ISLAM became the predominant Muslim group among black Americans. But when MALCOLM X, a former leader of the Nation of Islam, formally converted to a Sunni interpretation of Islam in 1964, other African Americans followed. Malcolm X's journeys to Muslim countries in the Middle East and his performance of the pilgrimage to Mecca were the subject of intense press coverage and interest, and some African-American Muslims followed along, mostly figuratively, some physically, his path to Sunni Islam.

However, it was not until 1975 that the majority of Nation of Islam members would become Sunni Muslims. That year, W. D. MOHAMMED, the son of longtime leader

ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, became the leader of the Nation of Islam after the death of his father. He rejected those doctrines and practices that contradicted basic Sunni teachings and encouraged his followers to pray five times a day, observe the dawn-to-dusk fast during the month of Ramadan, and go to Mecca for the hajj, or pilgrimage, if they could afford to do so. Mohammed, who took on the title of imam, or leader, also encouraged followers to read and study the Qur'an and apply it to the concerns of everyday life. Until his death in 2008, he presided over a network of mosques devoted to spreading Sunni Islamic principles in the black community.

As pivotal as Imam Mohammed was to the spread of Sunni Islam among African Americans in the late 20th century, other African-American Sunni leaders became important voices in the Sunni community. University of Michigan professor Sherman Jackson joined the FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA, helping to interpret shari'a for the North American context. JAMIL ABDULLAH AL-AMIN led a network of approximately 20 Sunni mosques that composed the group called Darul Islam. Imam SIRAJ WAHHAJ of New York became especially popular as an African-American Sunni spokesperson among immigrant Muslims in the 1980s.

African-American Sunni Muslims were among the most socially conservative or pious practitioners of Islamic religion in the late 20th century. In addition to wearing the *hijab*, African-American Sunni women sometimes donned a face veil, covering all but their eyes; some wore the burka, covering their entire bodies. Those who wore such dress explained, like many Catholic nuns, that they loved God, and they wore such clothing to honor and obey Allah. Some African-American Sunni women also entered polygamous marriages, saying that the Qur'an permitted a man up to four wives—and adding that there were too few black men available for marriage. Most other African-American Sunni Muslims expressed their religious piety during this period in terms of increased adherence to the pillars of Islamic practice and especially to the reading and studying of the Qur'an.

By the 1970s, there were also a substantial number of white and Hispanic converts to Sunni Islam. While many whites first became attracted to Islam by studying or practicing Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam, many of those Sufis and those who had nothing to do with Sufism began to embrace what they called the deep spirituality and discipline of Sunni Islam. Other whites and Hispanics came to Sunni Islam through marriage, as husbands and particularly wives came to adopt the religion of their immigrant Muslim spouses. These converts or their children assumed positions

of leadership in the Sunni Muslim–American community by the 1990s. For example, the white Sunni imam HAMZA YUSUF, who had studied for years under both Sunni and Sufi teachers in the Islamic world, became a national and international spokesperson for a peaceful, pious, and pluralistic form of Sunni Islam, especially after SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.

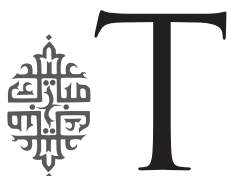
## CONCLUSION

Though religion and its practices and institutions are sometimes assumed to be elements of human culture that do not change over time, the history of religion, including the history of Sunni Islam among Muslim Americans, tells a different story. When Africans were abducted and brought to the Americas in the colonial era and early period of U.S. history, they did not have the economic resources or the political right to establish their own Muslim institutions for learning or worship. In this environment, keeping some of the prayers and occasionally fasting were as much as some Muslims could do. With the voluntary waves of immigration during the late 19th and 20th centuries, both indigenous and immigrant Muslims had the opportunity to build the religious institutions vital to the practice of any religious tradition. They also developed a religious subculture where their Sunni identities could be expressed in all realms of American life, both private and public.

Sameh Mustafa Asal and Edward E. Curtis IV

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## Tablighi Jama'at

The Tablighi Jama'at, or the "Society of Conveying" (the message of Islam), is an Islamic movement that began in British India in the 1920s. The founder of the movement, Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas (1885–1944), a graduate of the religious seminary in Deoband, India, was disillusioned by the traditional educational system and wanted to project Islam in a more substantial and obvious manner. Consequently, he launched the Tablighi Jama'at movement to preach Islam to Muslims who were deviating from what he considered to be the correct teachings of the faith and slacking in their commitment to the religion.

The program of the Tablighi Jama'at was officially launched in 1934 after a meeting of village notables was held in the Indian district of Mewat. Attendees of the 1934 meeting reached the consensus that the propagation and preaching of Islam was the duty of all Muslims and not just the religious elite. This focus on missionary work as the duty of all Muslims continues to be the defining feature of the movement to this day. Initially, the Tablighi Jama'at operated under two limitations: First, its geographical scope was restricted to within the Indian subcontinent and, second, its members limited their preaching to individuals who already identified as Muslim. However, for over half a century now, the Jama'at has become a transnational phenomenon and no longer only aims at helping Muslims strengthen their faith but also tries to convert non-Muslims to Islam.

The Tablighi Jama'at's activities first began in the United States in 1952 when *jama'ats* (small groups of Tablighi workers) journeyed to America. Part of the aim of these initial *jama'ats* was to recruit Muslim Americans to return with them to the Indian subcontinent to be trained as Tablighi missionaries. Members of these early *jama'ats* in the United States stayed in motels and ventured into urban areas in search of mosques receptive to their message. They also targeted university campuses and searched telephone directories in search of Muslim Americans.

Despite their fervor, it was only after the United States passed the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965 that a support network was established, an audience for preaching was clearly iden-

tified, and the pace of Tablighi activity picked up. Tablighi Jama'at members from the Indian subcontinent established themselves in cities such as DETROIT, CHICAGO, NEW YORK CITY, and PHILADELPHIA, among other places.

In the 1970s, a substantial number of AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS became members of the movement. In order to facilitate their initiation into the Jama'at, these new members were advised to travel to the three largest nations on the Indian subcontinent: India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. They were told that they should spend approximately 40 days in each country, making sure to visit the Nizamuddin center in Delhi, India; the Tablighi Jama'at center in Raiwind, Lahore, Pakistan; and the Jama'at center in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the number of immigrant South Asian Muslims who had been involved in Tablighi efforts increased, and they helped to spread the Tablighi message to CLEVELAND, Indianapolis, Nashville, New Orleans, and BOSTON. In 1980, the first annual international gathering of the Tablighi Jama'at in North America was held in Detroit. Another international gathering was also held in Detroit in 1985.

As many as 10,000 participants attended these meetings, some of the largest gatherings of Muslims in U.S. history. Both were attended by the then *amir*, or leader, of the Tablighi Jama'at, Mawlana In'amul Hasan (1918–95). Hasan established a *shura*, or council of elders, committee of the Jama'at in North America to coordinate Tablighi activities across the continent.

In the middle 1980s, in order to facilitate the smooth running of the organization, the Tablighis divided the United States into eight zones. Each zone is further divided into circles. Within each circle there are cities, and within each city are the mosques that are targeted as bases by the Tablighis. Although the Tablighi Jama'at movement aimed at propagating its message by the indiscriminate use of all mosques as bases, over time, specific institutions have come to be associated with Tablighi activities. A survey published in 1987 showed 25 mosques in the United States affiliated with the Tablighi Jama'at.

One of the defining characteristics of the Tablighi Jama'at is its resistance to bureaucratic organization. Consequently, the Jama'at has not incorporated itself as a legal entity in any state and has not established a physical headquarters, maintained a paid staff, published a newsletter, or even opened a central bank account. Instead, the Jama'at operates as a result of highly motivated and organized volunteers. The volunteers form temporary "delegations" with a leader. These delegations set out to perform a defined task—such as to preach in a certain region of the United States for a certain period of time—and disband after accomplishing their task. They do not leave behind any permanent structure, and if they are foreign visitors, they return to their country of origin, generally in India. By remaining loyal to its central leadership in India and maintaining a focus on personal face-to-face contact, the Tablighi Jama'at has been able to work and expand in a substantial manner in the United States.

Mashal Saif

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### taqwacore

*Taqwacore*, a community of punk musical artists, is an amalgam of the Islamic term *taqwa* ("God-consciousness") and *core*, the common suffix for punk subgenres, such as hardcore, grindcore, and emocore. Expressing a variety of perspectives, experiences, and relationships to Islam and the West, taqwacore bands often resist categorization as members of a "movement" or "scene" with its own codified ideology. Even the basic definition of taqwacore as "Muslim punk rock" is viewed as inadequate and misleading. Punk music itself emerged in the 1970s in the United Kingdom and the United States, led by such hard-driving, antiestablishment bands as the Sex Pistols and the Clash.

The earliest taqwacore artist, Kourosh Poursalehi of San Antonio, Texas, started his one-man band, Vote Hezbollah, in 2004 at the age of 15. Poursalehi, an Iranian-American who wore a silkscreened image of the Ayatollah Khomeini on his spiked vest, made it clear to journalists that the band's name was a joking response to anti-Islamic bigotry. Rather than attempt to adapt himself to mainstream America, he followed the punk ethos of celebrating alienation and deliberately provoking hostility.

A similar approach was taken by Basim Usmani, a Pakistani-American punk singer in Lowell, Massachusetts, who would attend white-supremacist punk shows while wearing a Pakistani flag on his leather jacket. In 2004, Usmani and Shahjehan Khan named their own taqwacore band the Kominas, for a Punjabi word commonly translated as "bastards" or "low-born."

Influenced in equal parts by punk's shock aesthetic and the militant pose of rap groups such as Public Enemy, the Kominas became known for provocatively titled songs such as "Suicide Bomb the Gap" (2006). One song, "Shari'a Law in the USA" (2006), evokes the Sex Pistols' "Anarchy in the UK" with its title and opening verse: "I am an Islamist, I am the Anti-Christ." While suspected by politically conservative critics of literally espousing violence, the Kominas also courted controversy among the Muslim-American community. The band's first song, "Rumi Was a Homo (But Wahhaj Is a Fag)," released in 2004, was an assault on Islamic homophobia. Specifically targeting SIRAJ WAHHAJ, a New York imam who had allegedly justified the burning of a gay-friendly mosque, the song's lyrics refer to him as a "fag" while portraying Rumi as a model of queer-positive Islam.

Later recruiting two Hindu musicians and describing the band's sound as "Bollywood punk," the Kominas have emphasized their shared experience as South Asian Americans, frequently incorporating Punjabi lyrics and references to Indian films. In 2006, the band helped organize a fund-raiser on behalf of a vandalized Hindu temple in Minnesota. Usmani touches upon his relationship to Pakistan in songs such as "Rabyah," written while he worked as volunteer relief after the 2005 earthquake, and "Par Desi," written after he was attacked by white youths in Boston. The song "9,000 Miles" addresses the estrangements and longings of the South Asian diaspora, while borrowing expressions of this theme from African-American Islamic movements: the lines, "He likes the devil because the devil gives him nothing," "that makes him other than his own self," and "they wanted to go back home, but could not swim 9,000 miles" are taken from a NATION OF ISLAM text. Reference is also made to NOBLE DREW ALI, who taught that African Americans must recognize their proper birthright as "Moors."

The name of Syrian-American Marwan Kamel's Chicago band, Al-Thawra, translates as "the revolution." Al-Thawra's content finds inspiration from the longtime association of punk with anarchism, most notably with Crass, and *rai* music, which Kamel calls the "punk of the Middle East." This political emphasis is shared by Secret Trial Five, an all-female band from Vancouver named in honor of five Muslim men who had been held in a Canadian prison for six years without any charges, much of it in solitary confinement, based on alleged evidence that neither they nor their lawyers were allowed to see. For singer Sena Hussain, a primary concern over



the “Muslim punk” label was the possibility that her work would be mistaken for devotional or conventionally religious music. For Al-Thawra and Secret Trial Five, taqwacore served as a secular response to political injustice, as opposed to “Christian rock” or other attempts to make organized religion seem “hip.”

Media confusion over taqwacore’s true meaning and purpose became common as the artists found coverage in the *Boston Globe*, London *Guardian*, *Newsweek*, Toronto *Globe and Mail*, and *Rolling Stone*, with articles falling under titles such as “Slam Dancing for Allah.” *Newsweek*’s labeling of Washington-based Diacritical as an “Islamic band” in 2007, despite its having only one Muslim member, created tensions within the group that led to its breakup. A classically trained sitar player, Diacritical’s Omar Waqar later pursued a solo project, *Sarmust*, to combine his backgrounds of punk rock and Sufi *qawwali* music.

In August 2007, the Kominas, Secret Trial Five, Al-Thawra, Vote Hezbollah, and Omar Waqar toured the northeastern United States in a green school bus. Nicknamed the “Taqua-tour,” the tour concluded at the annual convention of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) in Chicago, where the bands signed to take part in an open-mic event. The performance of Secret Trial Five, the first instance of a woman singing onstage at an ISNA event, caused the event’s organizers to call Chicago police and shut down the show.

Shortly after the tour, the Kominas were sued for defamation by author Asma Gull Hasan over a satirical reference to her in “Rumi Was a Homo.” The song’s attacks on both Hasan, who was well known in the Muslim community for her support of President George W. Bush and the war in Iraq, and Siraj Wahhaj, who had been named as a potential indicted conspirator in the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center, express the twin alienations of many taqwacore punks, marginalized by the political climates of both North America and the Muslim community.

Michael Muhammad Knight

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### Toledo, Ohio

Located in close proximity to Michigan’s southern border and on the southwestern edge of Lake Erie, Toledo is home to one of the oldest and most diverse Muslim communities in the state of Ohio. In the early 21st century, the population of Muslims living in the Toledo area numbered above 6,000 people out of a total population of approximately 300,000. Its members, consisting of more than 500 extended families,

represented at least 23 nationalities and included both Sunni and Shi’a Muslims.

Although Muslims lived in various hamlets throughout Ohio since the late 1800s, the first Muslim family—the Shoushers—may have come to Toledo in 1902, emigrating from Lebanon. More families followed, but the Muslim population remained small for many years. Muslims moving to and living in Toledo increased after WORLD WAR I. These Muslims were immigrants from the Middle East, primarily coming from either Syria or Lebanon. The Toledo Muslim community formed its first Muslim society in 1939 and was given an official charter in 1943, but the society eventually disbanded due to a lack of funds. A second organization, the Syrian American Muslim Society, was formed in 1951. The Syrian American Muslim Society hosted the second FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA at a Toledo hotel in 1953 and helped to establish the first Islamic center in Toledo.

As the Muslim population began to grow, so did the need for a communal space for worship. Under the leadership of Abul Jalil Abdo Fakihi, the Muslim community purchased land on Bancroft Street to build a mosque. Toledo’s Muslim community opened the first mosque in Toledo history in 1954, which at the time was one of only a dozen or so mosques in the United States. After the construction of this mosque, more second-generation Muslims came to settle in Toledo.

The migration of these American-born Muslims to Toledo included an influx of Muslims from nationalities other than Syrian and Lebanese. For instance, in late 1954, the community embraced the first group of Indian Muslims who moved to the city. With the addition of these new non-Middle Eastern Muslims to the Toledo community, the Syrian American Muslim Society and their leader, Yehiya Shousher, decided to change the name of the society to the American Muslim Society.

In *The Arab Moslems in the United States*, a comparative study of Toledo and DETROIT in the 1960s, sociologist Abdo Elkholy was the first person to fully explore the Muslim community of Toledo and record the community’s ability to adjust to life in the United States and embrace American culture. Elkholy noted how the Toledo Muslim community lived freely among their non-Muslim neighbors, whereas, at least according to Elkholy, the Muslims of Detroit isolated themselves in ghettos away from their non-Muslim neighbors.

By living among non-Muslims, Elkholy observed, the Toledo community had a better understanding of their neighbors. By maintaining one mosque, Muslims of Toledo also eliminated the tension that often occurs among different sects of Muslims, such as the Shi’a and the Sunni. In addition to residential integration, the Muslims of Toledo operated their businesses among non-Muslim businesses as



A bus that transports children to and from the Islamic School of Greater Toledo waits outside the Islamic Center of Greater Toledo. (photolibrary)

well. Intermarriage was also accepted and welcomed by the Muslims of Toledo. Welcoming converts greatly helped the Toledo community to grow in numbers and in their relationship with citizens of Toledo at large. All of these factors earned the Muslims of Toledo a great deal of respect and admiration from non-Muslims.

A curious occupation for the early Muslim community of Toledo was its involvement in the bar and liquor industry in the city. Prior to the 1970s, Muslims worked as merchants in the distribution and sale of alcohol in Toledo. In the late 1950s, Muslims owned 127 of Toledo's 400 bars—nearly 30 percent—along with liquor stores, carryout businesses, and restaurants that served alcohol. Muslims were active in other business ventures as well, but none as well documented as their participation in the alcohol industry of Toledo.

Elkholy believed that Muslim involvement with liquor-related businesses was the result of their Americanization. But this interpretation ignored the fact that temperance, or total abstinence from alcohol, was itself a mainstream American value and had been since the 1820s. If immigrants wished to assimilate into Anglo-American Protestant Christian culture, they may have been as likely to avoid alcohol as to consume or sell it.

Another explanation is that Toledo's Muslims did not identify alcohol-related businesses as sinful until the spread of Islamic religious REVIVALISM in the late 1960s and 1970s.

In the late 1950s, Elkholy thought that the barkeepers likely felt “subconscious religious guilt” over their liquor profiteering, but the proprietors themselves never admitted to feeling guilty about their work. These first- and second-generation Arab immigrants may have been practicing Muslims, but they were not scholars of the SHARI‘A, or Islamic law and ethics. Liquor, while denounced by religious scholars, had been a part of Arabs' everyday lives for centuries. In fact, Middle Eastern Muslims had practically invented the distillation of hard alcohol and gave it its name (the English word alcohol is derived from an ARABIC word). Temperance may not have been universally accepted as a central aspect of Muslim-American identity when Elkholy did his interviews in Toledo.

The Toledo Muslim community continued to grow through the 1960s and 1970s to the extent that by 1978 the first mosque was no longer sufficient for the community's needs. The community purchased land in Perrysburg, a suburb in the southwestern section of Toledo, and completed construction of the Islamic Center of Toledo in 1983. The mosque was designed by a Turkish architect, Talat Itil. The Islamic Center was built with two 135-foot minarets, a prayer room able to accommodate 1,000 people, windows featuring verses from the Qur'an and Arabic calligraphy, and a 500-person sermon hall.

Since its creation, the Islamic Center has served as the main center of worship for the Muslim community. However,

the Islamic Center of Toledo, also known as the Islamic Center of Greater Toledo, was not the only Islamic institution established in the Toledo area. Masjid Saad Foundation was founded by University of Toledo students in 1979, and in 2006, the organization purchased an old church and converted it to a mosque able to fit 1,000 people.

Masjid al-Islam, another Toledo Muslim organization, was originally comprised of NATION OF ISLAM adherents who converted to Sunni Islam. Its members were mainly African-American converts and were led by Imam Ibrahim Abdul-Rahim. Imam Ali Mosque and Masjid Qur'an wa Sunnah were also established as places of worship for Toledo's Muslim population. In 1994, the Toledo Islamic Academy, the first Islamic school founded in Toledo, began to offer classes from preschool to 12th grade, providing students with standard academic classes alongside a religious education including classes on QUR'AN and Muslim history. Besides the Islamic Academy, the University of Toledo, in 1999, established the Imam Khattab Endowed Chair of Islamic Studies.

The 21st-century Muslim community has gained national prestige for its progressive religious outlook. In 2001, the Islamic Center elected the first female president, Cherrefe Kadri, who, with Farooq Aboelzahab, the imam of the Islamic center, has promoted the importance of open-mindedness and independent reasoning in religion. Kadri emphasized interaction with people and good intentions over what she called dogmatic principles as the governing ethos of Islam. She believed that this strategy enabled the community to be seen as part of the entire Toledo community rather than a separate entity unto itself.

The strong bond the Muslim community has developed with its different groups and non-Muslim neighbors was shown in a number of communal events and gatherings. After the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, an inter-faith prayer service was scheduled at the Islamic Center to show support for the Muslim community of Toledo. Only a few hundred were expected, but nearly 1,500 people from different religious faiths came to support the Muslim community. Zaid Hummos, who was the president of Masjid Saad, mentioned that in 2006 many non-Muslims in Toledo were taking extra efforts to inform themselves about Islam.

The Muslim community of Toledo has continued to expand over the years. A number of new organizations, such as the United Muslim Association of Toledo, have been established along with Web sites, such as ToledoMuslims.com, to provide information on events and news about the community.

Matthew Long

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**Tribe of Ishmael** See ISHMAELITES.

### Turkish-American Muslims

The Republic of Turkey was established on October 29, 1923, succeeding the six-century-long Ottoman Empire (1299–1923). Originally established by Turks who migrated from Central Asia to Anatolia and accepted Islam in the 10th century, the Ottoman Empire dominated southeastern Europe, the Middle East, and northern Africa and ultimately became host to some 23 ethnicities. It was ruled primarily by Islamic LAW that was applied to the Muslim subjects of the empire, namely Turks and converts from acquired lands. Modern Turkey was founded upon the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after WORLD WAR I and accepted secular law. It has had a highly homogenous population religiously, with more than 99 percent of Turkish citizens being Muslim.

Immigration to America from the multiethnic Ottoman Empire began much later than that of Europeans and the forced arrival of Africans. Large-scale immigration began only in the late 19th century as a response to the increased labor demand due to industrialization in the United States. From 1860 to 1920, 60,000 to 100,000 Ottoman subjects arrived in the United States. Although no statistics reveal what portion of these Ottomans were Muslim, the majority, given their ethnicities, were not Muslims. Most of these initial Ottoman immigrants were ethnic Armenians and Greeks—both of which were not Muslims—and Arabs, who were not ethnic Turks. Those Ottoman Turks who did immigrate to America probably worked as unskilled laborers at factories in the Midwest and Northeast. Approximately 7,000 Ottoman subjects worked for the Ford Motor Company in DETROIT, MICHIGAN, in the first two decades of the 20th century. While most of these Ottoman subjects would have been ethnic Arabs, there were a sufficient number of ethnic Turks to establish several Turkish communal institutions.

Young single Turkish males who worked for Ford's Highland Park plant, which opened in 1907, established

boardinghouses where men could pass their leisure time by playing backgammon or asking one of their literate companions to write a letter back home. By 1924, Turks had established the first of several COFFEEHOUSES in Detroit. During this period, they also supported a Detroit chapter of the Turkish Red Crescent Society, a philanthropic organization that provided aid to Muslims in the United States and in Turkey. Around 1,000 members paid monthly dues of \$2 and were required to attend one meeting per year. By 1929, the group owned 538 plots in the Roselawn Cemetery and purchased an additional 200 plots in three nearby CEMETERIES for their members. Detroit's Turkish Muslims also sustained a chapter of the Turkish Orphans' Association, whose purpose was to aid children who had been orphaned during World War I.

According to an Armenian researcher, M. M. Aijian, writing in 1920, Turkish speakers in Chicago were divided along religious, national, and ethnic lines in this era. After World War I, Anatolian, Balkan, and Kurdish speakers of Turkish established enclaves that always included a coffeehouse and sometimes included lodging, restaurants, and pool halls. Aijian also reported that despite Prohibition, he observed Turks drinking beer one Sunday afternoon on Chicago's north side, lustily singing love songs in Turkish to the accompaniment of a small band. One of the first Turkish-American newspapers, *Sedai Vatar*, or Call of the Fatherland, was established in NEW YORK CITY after World War I. In 1933, Turkish New Yorkers established the Turkish Cultural Alliance of New York, later renamed the Federation of Turkish American Associations.

After WORLD WAR II ended in 1945, a small number of Turks immigrated to the United States: 798 Turks came during the 1940s, 3,519 during the 1950s, and 10,142 during the 1960s. These Turks tended to be highly educated medical doctors, engineers, and scientists or students pursuing higher education, a trend that accelerated in the 1970s. By 1990, half of the Turks living in the United States were foreign-born and the average age was 32. By 1996, there were 64,350 Turks living in the United States. Approximately half of these Turks were between the ages of 15 and 34. The 2000 U.S. Census counted 117,575 Americans of Turkish descent.

This more recent generation of Turkish Americans has continued the earlier trend of establishing cultural institutions that linked them with one another and with developments in Turkey. Turkish restaurants and markets have been established across the United States, and Turkish media outlets are available in most cities. Turkish Americans often use satellite dishes to watch Ebru TV, the first Turkish 24-hour television channel broadcast via satellite. Popular print media in the community have included the *Turkish Daily News*, the *Turkish Times*, and *Zaman*. By the 21st century, there were approximately 100 Turkish-American groups, including 70

Turkish Student Associations on university campuses around the country.

Despite the relative financial and social success of Turkish Americans, they have not made a visible impact on U.S. POLITICS. Especially before the 1970s, Turkish-American involvement in American politics was rare. The Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 mobilized many Turks to lobby the U.S. government to change its pro-Greek policies, but their voices were generally drowned out by the much larger and stronger Greek-American community.

Many of the most significant contributions to American society by Turkish Americans have come from secular Muslims. For instance, AHMET ERTEGUN (1923–2006), the leader of Atlantic Records and the cofounder of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, became one of the most influential music producers in the United States. Feza Gursey (1921–93) was the J. Willard Gibbs Professor of Physics at Yale University and won the prestigious Oppenheimer Prize and Wigner Medal. Muzafer Sherif (1906–88) was one of the founders of social psychology who helped develop social judgment theory and realistic conflict theory. Tunc Yalman, the artistic director of the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, and Osman Karakas, who received the 1991 National Press Award for best news photography, have been examples of Turkish-American Muslims' contribution to the arts.

Though many Turkish-American Muslims are secular, others are actively engaged in Muslim-American affairs and especially in INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS. The most noteworthy religious contribution of Turkish Americans has been the GÜLEN MOVEMENT, a Turkish Islamic movement created by Fethullah Gülen, who was born in Erzurum, Turkey, in 1941. Gülen, who has inspired millions of Turks around the world to commit or recommit themselves to an Islamic religious life, has lived in the United States since 1999. His vision has inspired many Turkish-American Muslims as well as non-Muslims to community service. The main focus of the movement has been establishing educational centers to serve the general public in increasing intercultural and interreligious dialogue and understanding around the United States.

Eren Tatari

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### **Tyner, McCoy (Alfred, Sulaimon Saud)**

(1938– ) *jazz pianist*

A legend of the hard bop style of JAZZ, McCoy Tyner is renowned for providing musical support to jazz great John Coltrane as well as for his seminal work as leader of his own ensemble.

Jazz pianist McCoy Tyner was born on December 11, 1938, in PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA. Tyner grew up in the same Philadelphia neighborhood as fellow jazz pianists Bobby Timmons and brothers Bud and Richie Powell, as well as bassist Reggie Workman and trumpeter Lee Morgan. Tyner's mother, a beautician, encouraged him to take up the piano. She also allowed the Powell brothers to practice on her piano, since they had none. Tyner's brother Jarvis would earn a degree of notoriety when he emerged as a prominent official in the American Communist Party. While attending West Philadelphia High School, McCoy Tyner jammed with Lee Morgan, Reggie Workman, and other local musicians.

As a teenager, Tyner began to practice Sunni Islam and adopted the name Sulaimon Saud, retaining his birth name professionally. At some point—it is not clear when—he stopped practicing Islam. In 1959, while holding down a factory job, Tyner formed the Jazztet with Art Farmer and Benny Golson. This ensemble was short-lived, but it resulted in the hit recording "Killer Joe" in 1960. Tyner soon received an invitation to join the ensemble of renowned saxophonist John Coltrane and appeared on such classic Coltrane albums as *Coltrane's Sound* (1960), *My Favorite Things* (1961), and *A Love Supreme* (1964).

During this period, Tyner also recorded several albums as a leader, including *Inception* (1962), *Reaching Fourth* (1963), *Today and Tomorrow* (1964), and *McCoy Tyner Plays Ellington* (1965). Additionally, Tyner served as sideman on the albums of fellow musicians Wayne Shorter and his former high school classmate Lee Morgan. Tyner left Coltrane's band in 1965 and was replaced with Coltrane's wife, Alice. He signed with Blue Note Records where he recorded *The Real McCoy* (1967) with former Coltrane bandmate Elvin Jones and *Assante* (1970).

In the 1970s, Tyner began to incorporate strings as well as elements of African, Latin, and Asian music in his performances. These newfound influences resulted in the Grammy-nominated album *Sahara* (1972). Despite such artistic success, the commercial aspects of jazz in the 1970s were such that Tyner spent time as a sideman for soul singers Ike and Tina Turner.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Tyner recorded prolifically, often with the younger generation of jazz players. Several of his recordings were tributes to his former bandleader John Coltrane. In 2002, Tyner was named a Jazz Master by the United States National Endowment for the Arts and, in 2003, received a Heroes Award from the Philadelphia Chapter of the Recording Academy. In 2005, he was granted an honorary doctorate of music from Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. The recipient of five Grammy Awards (most recently in 2004 for *Illuminations*), he continued to perform in the 21st century with a big band as well as his trio, featuring bassist Avery Sharpe and drummer Aaron Scott.

Jason E. Housley

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## United States foreign relations

Muslim Americans have been involved in the foreign policy of the United States since the beginning of the republic. From the entanglement of an AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM SLAVE in U.S. conflicts with the Barbary pirates in the early 19th century to the targeting of Muslim Americans as part of the “war on terror” launched by President George W. Bush after SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Muslim Americans have played both highly visible and largely unsung roles in the story of U.S. relationships with foreign nations and powers. A persistent theme in this history has been Muslim-American vulnerability to accusations of disloyalty to the United States, particularly in U.S. relations with Muslim countries. Despite their presence in North America since the 16th century, Muslim Americans have often been viewed, like Japanese, Roman Catholics, and other nonwhite and non-Protestant Christian groups, as foreign and thus potentially disloyal.

Though some Muslim Americans have opposed various foreign policy positions of the U.S. government, particularly the U.S. role in the Vietnam War, pro-Israel policies after 1967, and the more recent 2003 war in Iraq, many Muslim Americans also have been ardent supporters of U.S. policy abroad. Some have been staunchly opposed to communism, taking the side of the United States in its cold war with the Soviet Union. Still other Muslim Americans have become members of the foreign service of the United States. No matter what their views of U.S. involvement abroad, thousands of Muslim Americans have also joined the U.S. military, willingly sacrificing their lives to implement the foreign policy of the government.

### LATE EIGHTEENTH TO EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

The first military action conducted by the United States after the American Revolution (1775–83) was against the Barbary states, small semiautonomous Muslim countries in North Africa that were of little danger to France and England but regularly captured the naval vessels of weaker nations such as the United States in order to ransom the ships’ cargo crews. From 1785 to 1815, Algiers, Tripoli, Morocco, and Tunis

captured 35 American ships and took more than 700 sailors captive. From 1801 to 1805, President Thomas Jefferson prosecuted a successful naval war against Tripoli, but even after this victory, American ships and sailors continued to be captured and ransomed.

The plight of the captives caused anxiety in the United States—partly because their captivity invited comparison with the million African-American human beings who were forcibly enslaved in the country at the time. But insult was added to injury when some of the captured sailors “turned Turk.” That is, they converted to Islam. Five of the 300 captives from the U.S.S. *Philadelphia*, which ran aground outside of Tripoli in 1803, became Muslims, acts many Americans interpreted as “disgracing the flag.” And sometime between 1810 and 1813, a sailor named Walker from Baltimore abandoned “his country, his family, and religion” to live with the Muslim “horde of barbarians,” according to a U.S. diplomat in Algiers. The conversion of Americans to Islam, in other words, was seen in this important formative period as an act of political disloyalty, religious heresy, and sheer madness.

To be sure, however, the foreign policy of the young republic was not always bellicose toward the Muslim world, as exemplified by the strange case of ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA, a Muslim slave who was the beneficiary of the U.S. attempts to make peace, one way or another, with the Barbary states. Ibrahima, who had claimed he was a Moroccan, had written in ARABIC to the leader of Morocco in the 1820s asking for help in securing his freedom. His letter made its way from a U.S. senator to a U.S. diplomat in Tangier and finally to the desk of Secretary of State Henry Clay and President John Quincy Adams, who decided to support the request. Remarkably, Clay offered “the Moor” transportation back to Africa if his owner would free him. Ibrahima did return to Africa, but to the western part of Africa from which American slaves had come, not to the North African Barbary coast.

Ibrahima’s case and the cases of the converted sailors were unusual in this period. The direct involvement of Muslim Americans in U.S. foreign relations in the 19th century was limited. Since most Muslims in the country were

African-American Muslim slaves, they had little chance to influence the outcomes of American relations with the rest of the world. Policy makers did not concern themselves with persons who were neither citizens nor, according to many white Americans at the time, even full human beings.

The most prominent Muslim-American voice on foreign affairs of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was, instead, a white convert. ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB, the former U.S. consul to the Philippines who converted to Islam in 1888, spoke on behalf of Islam at the World Parliament of Religions held at the COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893 in CHICAGO, where he advocated strong relationships among the Muslim nations and the United States. With temporary financial support from some South Asian Muslims, he also established a Muslim mission in Manhattan and a Muslim-American journal in 1893. As a pamphleteer, Webb defended the (Muslim) Ottoman Empire's role in the Armenian massacres and attempted to convince his readers that the burgeoning movement to defend Armenians against the Ottoman Empire was "anti-American." In addition to receiving some financial support from the Ottoman Empire, Webb was appointed an honorary consul for Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II's government in 1901.

#### EARLY MUSLIM-AMERICAN OPPOSITION TO ZIONISM

If there has been one issue on which the vast majority of Muslim Americans have consistently criticized U.S. foreign policy, it has been the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Opposition to Zionism, the late 19th- and 20th-century political movement to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine, has deep roots among Muslim Americans. In 1917, British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour expressed the commitment of the British government, which was the colonial master of Palestine at the time, to establish a national home for Jews there. News of this declaration generated opposition in many quarters, especially among Arab communities. Arab-American leaders, most of whom were Christian in this period, attempted to convince the U.S. government to oppose the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. They were not alone—some Reform Jewish Americans, concerned that their citizenship rights in the United States would be threatened by the creation of a Jewish state in the Middle East, also registered their opposition to Zionism during this time.

On December 8, 1917, the Palestine Antizionism Society and the Ramallah Young Men's Society staged a demonstration that drew 500 protesters to the Bossert Hotel in Brooklyn, New York. The organizers issued a resolution that (1) objected to the formation of any nation "based on religious principles, by a minority [of Jews], contrary to the principles of the majority [of Muslim and Christian Arabs]"; (2) warned that Jewish immigrants, who were largely European, would

use their wealth to buy up Palestinian lands and homes; and (3) stated that Jewish immigration would force an "emigration of the rightful inhabitants" of Palestine. The leaders of this movement appealed directly to Secretary of State Robert Lansing and President Woodrow Wilson and, in 1919, following WORLD WAR I, sent a delegation to debate the fate of the Middle East at the Paris Peace Conference.

Throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s, Arab Americans continued their organized and sometimes high-profile opposition to Zionism. The Palestine Antizionism Society, which became the Palestine National League (PNL), published a book entitled *The Case against Zionism* in 1921. In 1922, movement leader Fuad Shatara faced off against representatives of the American Zionist Organization at a hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Representatives. As violent disturbances between Palestinian Arabs and the growing number of Jews in Palestine occurred in 1929, Arab-American activists also debated American Zionists in some of America's most prestigious periodicals, including the *Nation* and *Current History*. On September 9, 1929, the Young Men's Moslem Association, an organization led by Abd M. Kateeb, joined the PNL and the New Syria Party to demand self-determination for Palestinians in a meeting with Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson.

Though such efforts would continue, ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS and Christians failed to prevent the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. U.S. secretary of state George Marshall was swayed by the arguments that the establishment of a Jewish state was contrary to U.S. interests, but President Harry S. Truman overruled him and immediately recognized the independence of Israel. For Muslims and Arabs, both in the United States and abroad, these events were what they called a "catastrophe," a disaster that they would fight for the rest of the 20th century.

#### BLACK MUSLIMS BETWEEN WORLD WAR I AND WORLD WAR II

As African Americans converted to various forms of Islam in the 1920s and 1930s, they identified their religious and political solidarity with Muslims and other persons under colonial rule in Africa and Asia. Nearly all African-American social movements of the time, but especially those that stressed either communist leanings or sympathies for non-Western countries, were viewed as potentially subversive and tracked carefully by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). On the eve of WORLD WAR II, as the United States and Empire of Japan prepared for war, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, like many African Americans, were critical of U.S. claims to be fighting for freedom abroad when they were still discriminated against at home. Some African-American Muslims, like other black Americans, defended the Empire of Japan's

expansion in Asia, identifying with the Japanese as fellow people of color.

Sympathy for the Japanese among working-class and middle-class African Americans had been building since Japan defeated Russia in 1905. In the midst of the Great Depression, black Muslims, black Jews, advocates of black emigration to Africa, and black advocates for pan-Asian solidarity openly expressed sympathies for a fellow “colored” nation, and a Japanese national, Major Satokata Takahashi, created a “Development of Our Own” group to organize and consolidate such sentiments in DETROIT, Chicago, and St. Louis.

Various African-American leaders incorporated Takahashi’s ideas into their own political platforms. In 1932, Mittie Maud Lena Gordon, a former member of Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association, established the Peace Movement of Ethiopia (PME), which advocated the repatriation of black Americans to Africa while also defending the war objectives of Japan. The organization’s stationery included an Islamic star and a crescent, and in a June 14, 1942, meeting, Gordon said that the PME was affiliated with “Islam.” Another Chicago-based organization established in 1932 with anticolonial, pro-Japanese leanings was the Pacific Movement of the Eastern World (PMEW), which sought help from the Japanese to advance African-American interests. Led from 1934 to 1940 by Rev. David D. Ervin, a Holiness pastor of the Triumph, the Church of the New Age, the PMEW sometimes advocated a Japanese invasion of the United States in order to secure African-American equality, while at other times put forward the idea of blacks migrating to Japan.

As the expectation spread among thousands of African Americans that the Empire of Japan would save them from American racism in the early 1940s, the U.S. government began a systematic roundup of the black leaders thought responsible for such feelings. Among the 25 leaders arrested for sedition was ELIJAH MUHAMMAD, the leader of the Nation of Islam. Acquitted of the sedition charge, Muhammad was convicted for refusing to register for the military draft. The incident foreshadowed a pattern of African-American Muslim protest that would emerge after World War II: While black Americans would seldom engage in any truly treasonous activity against the United States, they would use their association with foreign powers and “foreign” traditions like Islam to protest the domestic and foreign policies of the U.S. government toward people of color.

#### AFTER WORLD WAR II

As the United States emerged as the world’s preeminent military and political power after 1945, Muslim Americans expressed a wide array of views toward U.S. foreign policy. The community was now so diverse that it was unlikely to

agree about U.S. involvement in and often control over so many countries and regions. Instead, Muslim-American concerns often echoed the interests of the racial, ethnic, or national group with which they felt solidarity. Most Albanian Muslim Americans, for example, opposed the post-World War II Communist takeover of their Muslim-majority country in Southeastern Europe. After 1945, many sought refuge in the United States, which they viewed as a land of political and religious freedom. In Detroit and their other ethnically Albanian enclaves, these Muslim Americans were fierce proponents of the cold war with the Soviet Union, hoping one day to free their country from the Soviet sphere of influence.

While Arab-American Muslims similarly viewed the United States as a land of freedom and opportunity, they also lobbied for the United States to change its policies toward Israel and Palestine. The Palestinian refugee crisis created by the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 elicited a strong desire among Arab Americans to aid the refugees. The FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (FIA) contributed to this effort, donating money for but also raising awareness about the plight of Palestinians. Though the FIA and other organizations hoped for a change in U.S. policy toward Israel, they often advocated for their position using the “soft language” of U.S. interests. As early opponents of Zionism had stated, they said, it was in the best interest of the United States to support Palestinian rights.

After World War II, it was not immigrant but indigenous Muslims who fiercely challenged the morality of U.S. foreign policy. And the focus of their opposition was not U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union but policy toward the newly independent states of Asia and Africa. As the imperial powers of France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, the United States, Italy, and others began to recognize the political independence of their colonies in Latin America, Asia, and Africa after World War II, these colonial powers simultaneously attempted to retain indirect control over political and economic affairs in the newly independent states. As the cold war developed alongside this new form of colonialism, the Soviet Union and United States also attempted to draw these countries into their respective spheres of influence and directly interfered in electoral politics to ensure the outcomes they desired.

In the midst of this struggle for power in what came to be called the “Third World,” the most public Muslim-American criticism of U.S. foreign policy came from members of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI). According to the historian Penny Von Eschen in her book *Race against Empire*, the NOI “permitted a space—for the most part unthinkable in the Cold War era—for an anti-American critique of the Cold War.” NOI leader Elijah Muhammad and his spokesperson, MALCOLM X, lauded the rise of independent Muslim-majority nations



and sought to become allies of Third-World Muslim leaders, especially Gamal Abdel Nasser, the president of Egypt who had successfully faced down the invasion of the British, French, and Israel during the Suez crisis of 1956. Malcolm X had recently praised the 1955 Afro-Asian Conference of developing countries in Bandung, Indonesia, as a turning point in the affairs of the world, as people of color vowed to reject the political and mental control of outsiders. Nasser would later sponsor the education of Elijah Muhammad's son Akbar Muhammad at the University of al-Azhar in Cairo, and in 1958 cabled Elijah Muhammad extending his "best wishes to our brothers of Africa and Asia living in the West."

The NOI continued its role as the Muslim voice of dissent against U.S. foreign policy in the 1960s as NOI member and heavyweight boxing champion MUHAMMAD ALI became America's most recognizable symbol of protest against the VIETNAM WAR. In 1966, at the height of the military conflict in Vietnam, Ali proclaimed he was willing to give up his boxing crown and go to jail rather than be inducted into the UNITED STATES MILITARY. He said that he was a conscientious objector whose religion prohibited the killing of innocents. Casting the Vietnam War as a racist and immoral conflict, Ali also stated that the U.S. participation was hypocritical: Quipping that "no Vietcong ever called me nigger," Ali pointed out the irony of the United States defending freedom abroad when it still had its own problems with racial equality at home. In 1967, he was convicted of draft evasion and stripped of his boxing title, though a 1971 Supreme Court decision, *CLAY, A/K/A ALI v. UNITED STATES*, overturned the decision and allowed Ali to return to the boxing ring.

#### U.S. MIDDLE EAST POLICY AFTER 1967

The 1967 victory of Israel in the Six-Day War over its Arab neighbors Jordan, Syria, and Egypt amplified pro-Palestinian feelings among most Muslims in the world, including in the United States. As a result of the Arab defeat, Jordan lost control of the holy places in the Old City of Jerusalem, and a new wave of Palestinian refugees fanned out across the Middle East, and when possible, also settled in the United States and Europe. Palestinians who remained in the West Bank came under what by 2010 was the longest-lasting military occupation of the 20th and 21st centuries. In the wake of the embarrassing defeat in 1967, Egyptian president Nasser's blustery rhetoric seemed hollow, and many Muslims and Arabs questioned about what had gone wrong. An increasing number of Arabs and Muslims felt that they could no longer rely on their elected or appointed leaders to advance the interests of Palestinians and began to assume more individual responsibility for the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

In the United States, though many Muslim Americans would become more politically organized in the 1990s around

foreign policy issues such as the BOSNIAN WAR of 1992 and Russian repression in the region of Chechnya, it was non-religious Arab-American organizations that took the lead in attempting to improve the image of Arabs in the United States. In late 1967 and early 1968, the Arab American University Graduates, a newly formed public affairs group that included Muslims but was not organized around Islamic concerns, sought to influence public opinion about Arab affairs by generating scholarship and awareness about the Middle East. In 1972, the National Association of Arab Americans began to lobby Congress directly on foreign affairs, endorsing initiatives such as the Camp David Accords, a peace treaty signed by Egypt and Israel in 1978.

That endorsement made clear that, at times, the interests of the U.S. government and some Muslim Americans converged. In Afghanistan, for example, the United States took an active but covert role in supporting the Afghan resistance against the Soviet invasion in 1979, a move that pleased at least some, if not many, Muslim Americans. Joining Saudi Arabia, and cooperating with Pakistan, Egypt, and even Israel, the United States funded Afghan militias in their struggle to expel the Soviet army. ROBERT DICKSON CRANE, a white American convert to Islam and former Nixon administration official, was appointed U.S. ambassador to the United Arab Emirates in 1981 to strengthen the clandestine alliance supporting the Afghan resistance. Secretary of State Alexander Haig's opposition to Crane's appointment, however, led to Crane's dismissal within the year.

Crane's quick departure was symbolic of the lack of access Muslim Americans would have in the 1980s and 1990s to the White House and its policies toward nations with significant Muslim populations. When Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, Muslim and Arab Americans lobbied the Congress to restrict the use of U.S.-made armaments in what was, according to most experts in international law, an illegal invasion of a sovereign country. Though Senator Mark Hatfield and a few other legislators, including Arab-American Christians Nick Jo Rahall (D-W.Va.) and Mary Rose Oakar (D-Ohio), also protested the use of American weapons, the vast majority of the Congress defended Israel's policy. The United States became further entangled in Lebanon in 1982 when President Ronald Reagan sent a peacekeeping force there to oversee the evacuation of the Palestine Liberation Organization from Beirut. Though U.S. forces were theoretically neutral in the war, they eventually became mired in the conflict, suffered significant casualties, and were completely withdrawn by 1984.

The United States' next overt military operation in the Middle East was the Gulf War of 1991. After Iraqi president Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, President George H. W. Bush led an international coalition to expel the Iraqi army from Kuwait. The Muslim Public Affairs

Committee (MPAC), founded in 1988 in LOS ANGELES, condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait but simultaneously called for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the region. Though the majority of Muslim Americans favored nonmilitary solutions to this conflict, a vocal minority of Muslim Americans, including Muslim-American leader W. D. MOHAMMED, supported the war. Many SHI'A MUSLIM AMERICANS with Iraqi roots also spoke out in favor of the removal of the Iraqi army from Kuwait and favored the overthrow of Hussein's regime.

When Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed the Oslo Accords on the White House lawn in 1993, some Muslim Americans expressed their reservations, but most Muslim-American leaders and the American Muslim Council (AMC), a prominent lobbying group formed in 1990, endorsed the peace agreement. They later criticized Israel for refusing to withdraw its military forces from the Palestinian territories. The AMC was equally critical of nominally Muslim regimes that did not live up to the ideals of Islam. So, after 1991, when the Taliban, the ruling government of Afghanistan, began to restrict female access to education and female participation in the workplace, the AMC condemned such activities as un-Islamic.

In the 1990s, the AMC and MPAC joined nearly every other Muslim-American public affairs group, including the African-American followers of W. D. Mohammed, in lobbying the U.S. government to recognize Palestinian claims to Jerusalem. Their motivation was at once religious and political in nature. In a 1999 issue of *Islamic Horizons*, ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) president MUZAMMIL H. SIDDIQI outlined the religious centrality of Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock to Muslims everywhere. Noting that it is considered the third holiest site in Islam, Siddiqi explained that it is from this place that the prophet Muhammad is believed to have ascended into the heavens during the *mi'raj*, or Night Journey.

On October 29, 2000, approximately 10,000 Muslim Americans and their allies converged on Washington's Lafayette Park to support the claims of Palestinians to Jerusalem. The event was cosponsored by more than 20 Muslim- and Arab-American organizations. Then, on April 20, 2002, in what was the largest pro-Palestinian rally ever held in the United States, approximately 50,000 Arab and Muslim Americans protested the ongoing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. Though these were significant political watersheds for Muslim Americans, the protests did not result in any substantive changes in U.S. policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

#### THE WAR ON TERROR

In the presidential election of 2000, while the majority of African-American Muslims, like African Americans more

generally, voted for Democratic candidate Al Gore, most Arab- and SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS favored Republican George W. Bush. Some were attracted to Bush because he was a social conservative and had criticized the use of secret evidence in the prosecution of terror-related cases. Some also applauded his criticism of the Clinton administration's frequent use of the military to engage in "nation-building."

The Bush administration's response to the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, however, disappointed those Muslim-American voters, as Bush embraced the very policies he had criticized before. In addition to relying on military intervention and secret evidence, Bush's "war on terror" included extraordinary rendition (that is, the transfer of detainees from U.S. custody to the custody of other governments) and the suspension of habeas corpus for enemy combatants (that is, detainees were not allowed to challenge their detention in a court of law).

While Muslim Americans were overwhelmingly in favor of apprehending and punishing the 9/11 attackers, they were split on the question of how much force should be used against the Taliban government of Afghanistan, which provided haven for al-Qaeda. Muslim Americans were also concerned about President Bush's framing of the war on terror as a "crusade," a good-versus-evil campaign in which countries were either "with us or against us." As the scope of the war on terror expanded, Muslim Americans became overwhelmingly critical of U.S. policy. In 2003, the United States invaded Iraq and overthrew the government of Saddam Hussein. According to one poll, only 13 percent of Muslim Americans initially supported the IRAQ WAR. Like many non-Muslim Americans, most Muslims did not believe that the Bush administration had established a link between Hussein's regime and al-Qaeda, and they rejected the idea that the Iraq War was a legitimate part of the war on terror. A 2007 Pew poll found that 71 percent of Muslim Americans surveyed said that they did not believe the war on terror was a genuine effort to reduce terrorism.

#### CONCLUSION

Muslim Americans have long been central participants in the foreign relations of the United States. They have been, alternately, vocal opponents and loyal supporters of U.S. foreign policy. After the attacks of September 11, 2001, some critics of Muslim Americans, repeating old STEREOTYPES, said that Muslims were a dangerous and potentially disloyal force inside the country that needed to be watched. Such overt prejudice, which echoed earlier views about German Americans during World War I and Japanese Americans during World War II, ignored the history of Muslims in America. That history showed that while Muslims have often questioned, deeply and sincerely, the foreign policy of the United States, all but a



As part of its public diplomacy campaign after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the U.S. government sought to publicize the relative freedom and success of Muslims in America. In 2002, a woman in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, reviewed an advertisement in a local publication that was part of the campaign. (Zainal ABD Halim/Reuters/Landov)



few have sought to use the means that the U.S. Constitution provides to change the policies of the country.

Edward E. Curtis IV

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### Dusé Mohamed Ali

#### "Awakening of Islam" (1922)

Writer and activist Dusé Mohamed Ali (1866–1945) was an intellectual who believed that racial and ethnic minorities in the West should take an active interest in Western foreign policy toward the "colored world," which included Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The founder in 1912 of the London-based *African Times and Orient Review*, a monthly journal that sought to articulate the "aims, desires, and intentions of the Black, Brown, and Yellow races," Ali was an Egyptian-born Muslim who immigrated at an early age to Great Britain, where he received an English-language education. In 1921, he moved to New York and became a foreign affairs columnist for the *Negro World*, the official newspaper of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Both echoing and shaping UNIA leader Marcus Garvey's call for the unity of all colonized people against their Western oppressors, Ali furthered the idea, already beginning to grow among black Americans, that

*Islamic religion and Muslim nations were black people's natural allies in the struggle for freedom and equality. Ali also expressed the idea, popular among many Muslim Americans throughout the 20th century, that the West should adopt a friendlier foreign policy toward Muslim nations. In this 1922 Negro World column on the "awakening of Islam," Ali criticized the attempts of the West to carve up Turkey after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I in addition to decrying other Western geopolitical schemes to control the rest of the world.*



For over three hundred years the Turks have been fighting a defensive battle against aggressive Christianity and they have not progressed because they have never had time to set their house in order. Yet, when and where they had the opportunity, the Turks have shown themselves capable administrators for they not only succeeded in maintaining peace in the Balkans during their period of overlordship, but they also managed to establish a condition of order among the contending Christian factions in Jerusalem who were ready to show their Christ-like attributes by their wanton and bloody rioting about the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Eastertide and but for the efforts of the Turkish soldiery, these upholders of the cross would have turned the Holy City into a veritable shambles.

Having observed the injustice which has been meted out to Turkey, first by Czarist Russia and then by Great Britain after the Crimean War, and subsequently by Austria, Italy and the Balkan States, the Muslim world realized that commercial Christendom with the assistance of its governments meant to humiliate Turkey and seize all those rich lands in Asia Minor which were ripe for exploitation and which were held by the despised Turk. It was furthermore intended by the "Great Powers" to wipe out Islam, even as Judaism had been wiped out by Titus, making of the Muslim a wanderer on the face of the earth, even as was the case of the Jews. Now the European Christian has never appeared to realize that . . . the degradation of Turkey meant the humiliation of the Muslims throughout the world. It is direct opposition to Islam to assume that it is aggressive. On the contrary, the Muslim world is specifically enjoined by our Prophet to be on the defensive rather than the offensive.

Turkey, after her early conquest of Europe under the first Sultan, ending with the reign of



Sulieman the Magnificent [in 1566], never was the offender. She has been on the defensive ever since that distant day when she was driven back from the gates of Vienna.

Meanwhile Muslims noted the unfriendly attitude of Great Britain which began with the attacks made by Mr. W. E. Gladstone [British Prime Minister] on Abdul Hamid [Ottoman Sultan]; the Bulgarian assumption of autonomy backed by Russia; Britain and the great powers; the seizure of Tunis by France in 1881; that of Egypt by England in 1882; the unwarranted occupation of Mussawa and other towns on the Red Sea littoral by Italy and France, which formed part of the Turkish Empire, by reason of the fact that, although nominally Egyptian territory, the late Khedive, Ismail, was, after all, only a vassal to the Sultan of Turkey.

Equatorial Africa was handed over to the ruthlessness of Belgium and its Red King, and Austria decided to take a hand in the game of spoliation by annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina. England then arrived at an understanding with France which resulted in . . . the establishment of a French protectorate over Morocco—the Riff being assigned to Spain—and the deposition of its sultan, and the former power, after privily aiding the young Turks in their revolution and the dethronement of [Ottoman Sultan] Abdul Hamid, shed a benevolent smile upon an intriguing Russia, who engineered the first Balkan war immediately after Turkey's unsuccessful effort to save Tripoli from the powers of Italy.

The first Balkan war having materialized, although Sir Edward Grey had previously assured the late Kamel Pasha, Turkey's Grand Vizier, that the powers would see to it that Bulgaria should not be allowed to disturb the peace of the Balkans; England's Minister for Foreign Affairs declared that whatever the result of the war, the status quo ante bellum would be maintained. This was because the powers thought Turkey strong enough to defeat the Balkan confederation. When, however, Turkey was beaten by the Balkan States with the covert assistance of Russia, the treaty of London was made which deprived Turkey of her possessions in Thrace and Macedonia. And the Turkish-European line was drawn between Enos and Midia. Russia, finding that Ferdinand of Bulgaria had Constantinople within his grasp, demanded that the capital of Islam should be handed over to the Muscovite; but Ferdinand having objected,

Russia immediately set Serbia and Greece upon Bulgaria and the second Balkan war was put into operation, resulting in the defeat of Bulgaria, the reoccupation of Adrianople by Turkey and the treaty of Bucharest, which restored a portion of Thrace and Macedonia to Turkey.

The great war [World War I (1914–18)] followed quickly upon the heels of the Balkan imbroglio, and Russia, who still hankered after Constantinople, by bombarding several Turkish Black Sea towns with her Black Sea Fleet, brought Turkey into the war because of her reprisals. The terms of the unjust treaty of Sevres is fresh in the minds of all those interested in this question. The Muslims of the world have become dissatisfied with the treatment Islam has received at the hands of the “Big Four” [United States, United Kingdom, France, and Italy]. It has discovered that if it does not “hang together” it must “hang separately,” and the Indian Hindu, reaching out for a much-advertised self-determination, joined hands with the Indian Muslim in his efforts to restore to Turkey a fair share of those possessions which were wrested from her.

There are 500,000,000 Asiatic and Negro Muslims in the world. These Muslims have become tired of European aggression. They mean to be up and doing in defense of their religious freedom and the Khalifate [the institution, located in Istanbul, in nominal control of the Sunni Muslim world]. Turkey is the Khalifate and the Khalifate is Turkey. Muslims are not on the offensive; they are on the defensive. If, however, Britain shall continue her anti-Muslim and anti-Turkish policy, so much the worse for the British Empire, for the unstemmed march of Islamic conversion is reaching out to the four corners of the earth. Even leading Englishmen and Englishwomen have embraced the Faith in “Christian England.”



Source: Dusé Mohamed Ali. “Foreign Affairs: Awakening of Islam,” *Negro World*, 12, no. 7 (April 1, 1922): 4–5.

### United States military

From the American Revolution to the war on terror, Muslims have fought in almost every conflict involving the United States military. By the early 21st century, there were thousands of Muslim-American men and women serving in the nation's armed forces. Their sacrifices for a country so often

seen in the Islamic world as anti-Muslim—at least during the first decade of the 21st century—has been symbolically important. In an age characterized by military actions against Muslim-majority nations, Muslim-American soldiers have received recognition that was absent for much of U.S. military history.

### AMERICAN REVOLUTION

At least four Americans who may have been Muslim served in the American Revolution (1775–83): Bampett Muhamed; Yusuf Ben Ali, whose slave name was Joseph Benhaley; Salem Poor; and Peter Salem, whose slave name was Peter Buckminster. Muhamed, who was a corporal by rank, served from 1775 to 1783 in Virginia, while Ali's record is unclear.

U.S. postage stamps have commemorated both Salem and Poor, whose Muslim identities are less certain. Peter Salem, freed by his master, may have fired the shot at the Battle of Bunker Hill that killed British major John Pitcairn on June 17, 1775. Salem reenlisted in the Continental Army in 1776 and served at the Battles of Saratoga and Stony Point. He died at Framingham, Massachusetts, in 1816. Salem Poor, with whom Peter Salem has sometimes been confused, purchased his freedom in 1769 and enlisted in 1775. He also fought at Bunker Hill, where he distinguished himself on the field. Subsequently, officers penned a commendation describing him as an "excellent" and "experienced" officer, concluding that "in the Person of this Negro Centers a Brave & gallant Soldier."

Turning to records of the War of 1812, three men with Muslim last names can be identified from enlistment records. These were Bilali Muhammad, or BILALI OF SAPELO ISLAND, Jacob Amin, and John Hamin, who served as a corporal in the Fourth Company of the Virginia Militia. Bilali Muhammad was an overseer of other slaves on Sapelo Island, where he reportedly led a group of them ready to defend the GEORGIA SEACOAST against British invasion.

Much of the research on Muslims in the military depends on identifying Muslim last names. This does not guarantee that the bearer was a Muslim, since some may have converted to Christianity or have had no religious beliefs. Similarly, those with Muslim first and last names cannot automatically be taken to be Muslim, although a Muslim identity is highly likely. In the case of the name Muhammad or Ali, the likelihood of Christian rather than Muslim identity dramatically diminishes.

### CIVIL WAR ERA

In 1856, Hajji Ali (ca. 1828–1903) was recruited from the Ottoman Empire by the U.S. government to drive camels for the U.S. Army. He arrived on the USS *Supply* and worked with the U.S. Camel Corps until it was disbanded in 1864.

The army imported 60 camels to use in the arid Southwest. Ali died in 1902, having acquired U.S. citizenship in 1880. He was also known as Hi Jolly and was perhaps a convert to Islam from a Greek Christian family.

According to Amir N. Muhammad's *Muslim Veterans of American Wars* (2007), as many as 292 Muslim last names appear in troop listings for the Civil War (1861–65). Of these, 10 fought in the Confederate Army, and four served in the racially segregated Union Army. In the Union Army, the highest-ranked Muslim officer was Captain Moses Osman, who served with the 104th Illinois Infantry. The first person with a Muslim last name buried in a national military cemetery was W. B. Osman (no known relation to Moses Osman), who died in 1865 and was interred in Poplar Grove National Cemetery in Petersburg, Virginia.

NICHOLAS SAID (ca. 1831–82), also known as Mohammed Ali ben Said, served in the Civil War from 1863 until 1865. Born in Bornou (near the modern-day borders of Libya, Chad, and Sudan) around 1831, he was raised to practice African traditional religion and later converted to Islam. Then, in the 1850s, he converted, probably under duress, to the Russian Orthodox Christianity of his master. He spoke several languages, traveled widely, and arrived in the United States as a freedman, although he had been a slave in three previous continents (Africa, Asia, and Europe). He reached the rank of sergeant in the Union Army.

### WORLD WAR I TO THE VIETNAM WAR

The onset of WORLD WAR I, which the United States entered in 1917, saw a dramatic rise in the probable number of Muslim recruits and conscripts. Military records contain a total of 5,470 people with Muslim-sounding last names, with Muhammad—the most common—spelled in 41 different ways. The number of Muslims serving from 1917 to 1918 could be higher, given the claim that 13,965 Syrian Americans served in the U.S. armed forces, and a substantial percentage—from 10 to 25 percent—would likely have been Muslim. World War I veterans with Muslim names include Rashid Abdul, originally from Turkey, Mohamed Ali, born in Syria in 1893, and Mohammed Allah, from Arabia, born in 1892.

WORLD WAR II (1941–45) saw fewer recruits with Muslim last names, but 1,555 men and women so far have been identified. Of these, 58 had the name Muhammad, which was spelled in 17 different ways. Many American servicemen and servicewomen with Muslim last names, including many with Muslim first names, had emigrated from all parts of the Muslim world, though some were born in the United States.

One World War II veteran, Abdullah Igram from CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, was a prominent member of the city's Lebanese Muslim community. After the war, he convened the first national meeting of the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC

ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA in 1952. In 1953, he wrote to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, former supreme commander of Allied Forces in World War II, requesting that Muslim servicemen and servicewomen be permitted to have the letter *I*, for Islam, printed on their dog tags, the identification tags worn by military personnel. Christians were identified with a *C*, and Jews with an *H* (for Hebrew), but this section of the tag was left blank for Muslims. Consequently, a Muslim soldier killed in action might not receive the correct burial rite.

Eisenhower initially declined Igram's request but later the Department of Defense agreed, and during the 1950s "I" became an official category. For the first time, Muslims serving in the U.S. armed forces who chose to declare their religion could be officially recognized and counted as Muslim. During the Korean War (1950–53), several Muslims were captured and imprisoned by the North Koreans, and others died on the battlefield. The latter include Wilbur C. Islam, killed in November 1951, and Dirk Robert Abbas, killed on October 2, 1952.

According to the Combat Area Casualties Current File, at least 12 Muslim Americans died in the VIETNAM WAR. One of them, Keith A. Rahman, was awarded the Joint Services Commendation Medal on April 2, 1971, probably the highest award honoring a Muslim in the U.S. military to this point in time. Some Muslims opposed America's involvement in Vietnam, especially members of the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), which asserted that blacks should not fight in an army that failed to treat them equally. Like other African-American civil rights groups, the NOI pointed out that blacks were much more likely than whites to be killed in action, arguing that they were treated as expendable and more likely to be placed in greater danger. Famously, the heavyweight boxing champion and NOI member MUHAMMAD ALI (1942– ) was sentenced to five years in prison for draft evasion in 1967, although the Supreme Court rescinded this sentence in 1971. Almost 100 NOI members were jailed for resisting the draft.

#### AFTER THE COLD WAR

Following the end of the cold war in the early 1990s, the U.S. military was deployed to several Muslim-majority nations for a variety of purposes, including peacekeeping missions in Somalia and during the BOSNIAN WAR. During the Gulf War from 1990 to 1991, the military hosted a visit in Saudi Arabia from W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), the leader who transformed the original Nation of Islam into the WORLD COMMUNITY OF AL-ISLAM IN THE WEST, to offer advice on religious orientation for troops stationed there. Mohammed was credited with assisting the military in accommodating Muslims and persuading the Department of Defense to introduce Muslim CHAPLAINS.



Major James Ahearn, probably the most decorated Muslim-American soldier in U.S. history. (U.S. Army/AP Images)

The military has deliberately recruited Muslim troops since 1990 in hopes that these Muslims will assist other personnel in better understanding and relating to Muslim populations. By the 21st century, there were as few as 3,700 and as many as 20,000 Muslims in the U.S. military. The dramatic range in the estimate is due to two factors: The Department of Defense does not publish a specific figure, and Muslims in the military often choose not to identify their religious affiliation. Since the 1990s, several organizations have been established to support Muslims in the military, including the Muslim Veterans Association, Muslim Military Members, the American Muslim Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs Council, and the Muslim American Military Chaplains Association.

Many Muslim Americans served with distinction and lost their lives during the Gulf War (1990–91), Afghanistan War, and IRAQ WAR. By 2010, Section 60 of Arlington National Cemetery, where those killed in Iraq and Afghanistan have been buried, included Captain Humayun S. M. Khan, who died June 8, 2004, when he diverted a suicide bomber from his unit. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. Colleagues spoke of him as a "peacemaker" whose ambition was to become a military lawyer.

The same honors were awarded to another Muslim casualty of the war in Iraq, U.S. Army specialist Kareem Rashid Sultan Khan, killed August 6, 2007, and buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Among the many eulogies that Khan received, perhaps the most symbolically important was from Secretary of State Colin Powell, who on October 19, 2008, discussed the meaning of Khan's death on NBC's *Meet the Press*. Responding to rumors that Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama was secretly Muslim, Powell

reminded viewers that Obama was a practicing Christian. But Powell, who endorsed Obama, also asked, "What if he is? Is there something wrong with being a Muslim in this country? The answer's no, that's not America. Is there something wrong with some seven-year-old Muslim-American kid believing that he or she could be president?" Powell went on to describe a photograph of Khan's mother, who was mourning at her son's grave site. He was moved, he indicated, by the scene. "He was 14 years old at the time of 9/11," said Powell, "and he waited until he can go serve his country, and he gave his life."

The highest-ranking Muslim fatality in Iraq was the death of Major James Ahearn October 7, 2007. Ahearn, who converted to Islam in Iraq, was married to an Iraqi wife. During his service, Major Ahearn received a Bronze Star for Valor, two Meritorious Service Medals, a second Bronze Star, five Army Commendation Medals, a Humanitarian Service Medal, two National Defense Service Medals, an Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal, a Kuwait Liberation Medal from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a Presidential Unit citation, a Valorous Unit Award, a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and an Army Service Medal—probably making him the most highly decorated Muslim in U.S. military history.

Muslim-American soldiers, like soldiers of all faiths, have also been discharged or faced court-martial for violations of their oaths or for the commission of crimes while in uniform. Army Sergeant Asan Akbar was found guilty of murder by a court-martial and sentenced to death on April 21, 2005, for rolling grenades into a tent on his base in Iraq. While some military observers said that Akbar's attack was evidence that Muslim soldiers could not be trusted, others pointed out that this man's attack was an isolated and atypical incident. In 2004, another member of the military, Senior Airman Ahmad I. Al-Halabi, was accused of espionage, though he pled guilty to lesser charges of disobeying orders, lying, and misconduct. Assigned to Camp Delta in GUANTÁNAMO BAY in Cuba, where the detainees were almost all Muslim, Al-Halabi was sentenced to 295 days confinement, demoted, and discharged.

As of early 2009, the highest-ranking Muslim officer serving in the U.S. military was Colonel Douglas Burpee, a Marine stationed in Afghanistan as a helicopter pilot whose call sign was "Hadji," or Pilgrim. Born in Pakistan, Burpee immigrated to the United States in 1981. He has said that his military service to his country is an expression of his Islamic faith, since Islam opposes the actions of terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda.

The first Muslim to command an operational aviation squadron in the navy was Commander Muhammad Muzzafar F. Khan, who took over from Commander Timothy Langdon of Sea Control Squadron (VS) 31 in May 2004.

### MUSLIM MILITARY CHAPLAINS

Several significant events relating to Muslims in the U.S. military followed from the decision to commission Muslim chaplains. In 1993, the crescent symbol was authorized for Muslim chaplains to wear on their lapels. That year, Army Captain Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad, based at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C., became the first Muslim military chaplain after graduating from the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences in Leesburg, Virginia, the only school recognized for such training. After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Muhammad wrote to various Muslim scholars to solicit their opinions on whether Muslims in the U.S. military could deploy to a Muslim country where they might find themselves fighting and killing fellow Muslims.

This act resulted in considerable controversy due to the diverse opinions and responses that were received. Several eminent Muslim scholars, including Yusuf al-Qaradawi of Qatar, signed a FATWA, or religious opinion, which stated, "It's acceptable—God willing—for the Muslim-American military personnel to partake in the fighting in the upcoming battles, against whomever, their country decides, has perpetrated terrorism against them." Some scholars declared that Muslims could deploy to a Muslim country only in a noncombatant capacity. In 2003, Abdullah Webster refused to serve in Iraq, citing conscientious objections on religious grounds in defense. He was tried and convicted by a military court-martial for refusing to serve and sentenced to 295 days incarceration. Amnesty International declared him a prisoner of conscience. Webster was dishonorably discharged and released in April 2005.

The first army Muslim chaplain was followed by the appointment of Navy Lt. M. Malik Abd al-Mut'a Ali Noel, Jr., commissioned as a chaplain in 1996. A year later, a mosque was opened at the Norfolk Navy Base, and in 1998, a crescent was added to the Christian cross and Jewish Star of David on the exterior of the military chapel at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. The Chaplains Board has issued advice to senior officers that they should allow Muslims, when possible, to leave duty early when fasting during the month of Ramadan and to grant leave during the Muslim HOLIDAYS, including the feast days following Ramadan and hajj, the season of pilgrimage.

In 1999, Navy Lt. Saif-ul-Islam became the first Muslim chaplain assigned to the U.S. Marines. Achieving the rank of Lieutenant Commander by 2008, Islam has twice received the Joint Services Commendation Medal. In 1998, an Islamic prayer hall was opened in Fort Lewis, Washington, home of the 29th Signal Battalion, where Captain JAMES YEE (1968– ) was stationed at the time. There were a dozen Muslim soldiers in its ranks. Yee estimated that between 100



and 150 soldiers at Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base were Muslim.

In 2000, the air force followed the army and navy when it appointed Abdullah Hamza Al-Mubarak as the first Muslim chaplain. A commissioned officer since 1997, he had also served in the air force reserve. In September 2005, stationed at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, Captain Al-Mubarak took part in the opening of the air forces' first prayer space designated for Jewish and Muslim worship.

On November 21, 2006, West Point opened a Muslim prayer hall for the 30 or so regular Muslim military attendees at Friday prayers. Also during 2006, the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, hosted its first celebration of Eid al-Fitr, the feast that concludes the month of dawn-to-sunset fasting during Ramadan. Senior officers and Pentagon officials have started to attend Muslim celebrations in what has been described as a bid to attract more Muslim recruits, though some soldiers have reported that the military can be a difficult environment for Muslims. Chaplain Captain Abdullah Hulwe was the only Muslim chaplain deployed in Iraq, where he has said that he had to educate fellow soldiers on how to treat Iraqi detainees with respect. He also reported that his wife has faced discrimination at military bases in the United States.

### CONCLUSION

In the course of U.S. history, Muslim-American members of the military have gone from being highly invisible to highly visible. Despite the fact that thousands of Muslims fought in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War, there was no official recognition that they existed until the 1950s, when Muslim-American activists successfully lobbied for an identification tag that marked them as members of the Islamic religion. That grudging recognition changed by the late 20th century, however, as UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS and military activities focused primarily on Muslim-majority nations. During the Gulf War and war on terror, the services and sacrifices of Muslim soldiers became symbols in a war for the hearts and minds of Muslims all around the globe. President George W. Bush cited the mere presence of Muslims in the U.S. military as proof that the war on terror was not a war on Islam and Muslims. Muslim-American activists stated that the presence of Muslim servicemen and servicewomen evidenced how much Muslims had contributed to the country. Muslim-American soldiers themselves amassed impressive records of service and, like soldiers of many other faiths, have given their lives for their country.

Clinton Bennett

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### USA PATRIOT Act

U.S. Public Law 107-56, passed October 26, 2001, and officially entitled "Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism," is best known by its acronym, the USA PATRIOT Act. In response to the events of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, this law sought to enhance domestic security, increase the ability of law enforcement agencies to monitor potential terrorists, increase border security, and "deter and punish terrorist acts in the United States and around the world." The PATRIOT Act authorized the Department of Justice to detain people it considered terrorist suspects with no probable cause as "material witnesses" to crimes. The Department of Justice

was not required to release the names of these individuals taken into custody.

The law and its enforcement had an immediate impact on the lives of thousands of Muslim Americans and Muslim visa holders in the United States. In November 2001, guidelines for the “voluntary” interviews of more than 5,000 non-citizen men in the United States on nonimmigrant visas from either Arab or Muslim countries were issued to all U.S. attorneys and all law enforcement agencies. These guidelines encouraged law enforcement officials to ask a series of questions meant to draw out the potential suspect’s links to terrorism, including such queries as: “How did you feel when you heard the news about the World Trade Center attacks?” It was thought that such interviews might generate leads in the prosecution of terrorists. Men ages 18 to 33 who had been living in the United States on student, work, or tourist visas since January 2000 were sent letters asking them to volunteer for questioning. Even though the interviews were said to be voluntary, there were implications that visas could be revoked for failing to volunteer.

In November 2001, the Department of State slowed visa processing for men from Arab and Muslim countries. Soon after, students from countries with terrorist affiliation were arrested on visa violations. In January 2002, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) started tracking down and deporting more than 6,000 noncitizen males who had been ordered by a judge to leave the United States but had not done so. According to the U.S. government, there were more than 314,000 “absconders” in the United States, but less than 2 percent were Middle Eastern. To critics of the USA PATRIOT Act, the government’s focus on Middle Eastern and other Muslim males over other absconders was clear evidence of racial and religious profiling and bias.

In May 2002, the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act required all airlines to submit a list of passengers who have boarded a plane bound for the United States. This act also required strict monitoring of foreign students. By June 2002, the Department of Justice requested that U.S. customs officials “seek out and search all Yemenis, including American citizens, entering the U.S.” This action resulted in Yemeni Americans being removed from planes and boarding lines. In July 2002, the INS started enforcing the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, which requires all aliens to register changes of address within 10 days of moving. In response to this act, a legal Palestinian immigrant from North Carolina was arrested for driving four miles over the speed limit and detained for two months, charged with failing to register his new address. In August 2002, a fingerprinting and registry initiative was announced for persons from select Arab and Muslim countries. This policy, which expanded to include all other

foreigners, requires all visa-holding foreign visitors to be fingerprinted, photographed, and registered upon entry to the United States.

Since passage of the PATRIOT Act, it is estimated that at least 50 Muslim men have been arrested as “material witnesses.” For example, Abdallah Higazy, an Egyptian-born student, was arrested on December 17, 2001, as a material witness in the 9/11 case when a pilot’s radio had been reportedly found in his hotel room that overlooked the World Trade Center. While detained, Higazy was coerced to give a false confession as officials threatened Higazy and his family. The charges against Higazy were dropped when evidence surfaced that the radio did not belong to him and that a hotel security guard had lied about the situation. BRANDON MAYFIELD, an American-born Muslim living in Oregon, was also arrested as a material witness in connection with the 2004 Madrid, Spain, train bombings when a fingerprint was erroneously matched with Mayfield’s. Mayfield had been subjected to warrantless surveillance in accordance with the PATRIOT Act prior to his arrest. Upon his arrest, his home and law office were searched and his computer and files seized. Mayfield was released when Spanish authorities announced that the latent fingerprint reported to be Mayfield’s actually belonged to an Algerian national.

According to Muslim-American advocacy groups, since the USA PATRIOT Act was implemented, Muslim Americans, Arab and non-Arab alike, have been denied some of their most basic constitutional rights, including Fourth Amendment rights that protect U.S. citizens against unreasonable searches and seizures without probable cause. According to its critics, the PATRIOT Act has such broad parameters that the U.S. government can take away people’s most basic human, civil, and constitutional rights whenever it chooses, with no probable cause, simply on the suspicion of possible terrorist ties. The act’s passage and implementation have brought together a coalition of civil rights and civil liberties groups, including the non-Muslim American Civil Liberties Union and the Muslim COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS, who continue to challenge the act in the courts and among the general public.

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**values** See ISLAMIC THOUGHT; RELIGIOUS LIFE; SHARI‘A.

### Vietnam War

The Vietnam War, often called “America’s longest war,” took place between communist North Vietnam and U.S.-backed South Vietnam from 1954 to 1975, with the United States first sending troops in the early 1960s and large numbers in the mid-1960s. Viewed in the context of the cold war, U.S. involvement was predicated on stopping the spread of communism throughout Southeast Asia. The human costs were enormous. An estimated 2 million North and South Vietnamese civilians and soldiers died, and 58,200 members of the UNITED STATES MILITARY perished in the conflict. From 1954 to 1972, successive U.S. presidential administrations offered support to various South Vietnamese regimes in their struggle against North Vietnam. In 1972, President Richard Nixon announced a policy of “Vietnamization,” meaning that U.S. troops would gradually be withdrawn and the South Vietnamese would be primarily responsible for waging the war. In 1975, North Vietnamese forces reunited the country under communist rule.

As they had done in WORLD WAR I and WORLD WAR II, Muslim Americans fought and died in the U.S. military during the Vietnam War. At least 12 Muslim Americans gave their lives, according to the Combat Area Casualties Current File. In many ways, however, the most important contribution that Muslim Americans, especially AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, made to the war effort was to oppose it. The Vietnam War generated more opposition in the United States than any other war in American history, and African-American Muslim leaders were among the war’s vocal opponents, attracting the attention and often admiration of many non-Muslim and Muslim-American YOUTH. One Muslim American—MUHAMMAD ALI—became the face of anti-Vietnam protest.

### MUSLIM-AMERICAN TROOPS

Of the 12 Muslims that died in the conflict, 11 served in the U.S. Army and one in the U.S. Marines. They held military

grades from private first class to sergeant, and their ages ranged from 20 to 38. Six were listed as having gunshot wounds, and two died in helicopter crashes. Of the remaining four, two were listed as “accidental self destruction,” one as “accidental homicide,” and the last as “other.”

Islam Ozger, from New York, died on April 5, 1969, just shy of his 22nd birthday. A marine, Ozger had been in Vietnam less than a month before falling to small arms fire. As a part of India Company conducting sweeps in Quang Nam Province, he fell under heavy fire and was one of nine killed.

Eugene Miley was one of the victims of a helicopter engine failure during takeoff from Phouc Vinh in December, 1967. Staff Sergeant Sanford Ira Finger was the other Muslim-American helicopter casualty on “Warrior 143,” which crashed offshore in October 1971 as it flew from Tuy Hoa to Cam Rahn Bay. The condition of the debris recovered indicated that the aircraft had struck the water at high speed during inclement weather. Only four of the crew members’ bodies were found, not including Finger’s.

### OPPOSITION TO THE WAR

Though the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) was not formally a pacifist organization, its antiwar tradition nevertheless dated back to the 1930s, when it prohibited members from serving in the armed forces. During World War II (1941–45), NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) went to federal prison in 1942 on charges of draft evasion, and his son, W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), was later sent to prison for refusing service in the Korean War (1950–53). Such antiwar sentiment did not change with the conflict in Vietnam.

*MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, the NOI newspaper, became one of the most popular media sources among all African Americans opposed to the war and to Western interference in the developing world more generally. During the 1960s, the paper, which had a weekly circulation of 60,000, regularly featured articles, interviews, and political cartoons opposing the war. *Muhammad Speaks* presented the war as part of America’s racial struggles, highlighting racial inequalities in the armed forces, especially in the disproportionate casualty rate among blacks and other minorities.



When NOI members applied for conscientious objector status, claiming that their religious beliefs prevented them from serving in the military, they were generally denied on the basis that the NOI was not a legitimate religious group. In 1965, for example, Stanley L. Garland cited his Muslim religious views when he refused to take the physical examination required of all those drafted into the military before formal induction. After two years of court battles, Garland was convicted and sentenced to three years in federal prison for draft evasion. Garland was one of almost 100 NOI members who served prison sentences for resisting the draft during the Vietnam War.

The most publicized case of defying the draft came from the African-American boxing champion Muhammad Ali, who applied for conscientious objector status on August 23, 1966. In doing so, he pointed to his membership in the NOI and explained why he refused to serve in the military: "I ain't got no quarrel with the Viet Cong," he said, referring to the military forces of the North Vietnamese. "No Viet Cong ever called me a nigger." Later, he added that he refused to go "10,000 miles to help murder, kill, and burn other people to simply help continue the domination of white slave masters over dark people the world over. This is the day and age when such evil injustice must come to an end."

On April 28, 1967, Ali was arrested on charges of violating the Selective Service Act, the law that authorized the draft. He was stripped of his boxing license and heavyweight title by the New York State Athletic Commission and the World Boxing Association. Later he told *Sports Illustrated*: "I'm giving up my title, my wealth, maybe my future. Many great men have been tested for their religious beliefs. If I pass this test, I'll come out stronger than ever."

On June 20, 1967, Ali was convicted of draft evasion, sentenced to five years in prison, and fined \$10,000. But in 1971, the Supreme Court unanimously overturned Ali's conviction in *CLAY, A/K/A ALI V. UNITED STATES*. Muhammad Ali's public stance was a lightning rod for public debate and resulted in both admiration and outright scorn. Martin Luther King, Jr., praised his actions, whereas Representative Frank Clark (D-Pa.) found Ali to be a "complete and total disgrace." Detractors also included many black soldiers.

Another influential African-American Muslim critic of the war was MALCOLM X (1925–65), the NOI leader who became a Sunni Muslim after separating from Elijah Muhammad in 1964. As early as 1954, Malcolm linked the struggles of Vietnamese, Kenyans, African Americans, and others as people of color toiling under the yoke of Western colonialism and imperialism. Malcolm believed that the Vietnam War was just another in a long series of U.S. military actions designed to bring the country more political power and wealth. He encouraged black Americans to be in solidarity with "little rice farmers" and to follow their example as freedom fighters.

In late 1964, Malcolm X lashed out at the U.S. government, calling it the most "hypocritical since the world began," because it "was supposed to be a democracy, supposed to be for freedom." Condemning the fact that many African Americans were disenfranchised in the United States, Malcolm stated: "They want to draft you . . . and send you to Saigon to fight for them," while the "right to register and vote without being murdered" was of little concern. After Malcolm was assassinated on February 21, 1965, it was discovered that he had kept in his address book a North Vietnamese stamp depicting a U.S. helicopter being shot down by North Vietnamese forces—a symbol of his solidarity with the North Vietnamese.

The memory of Malcolm X became a rallying point for soldiers opposed to the war. "GIs United Against the War," established in 1969 at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, and the "Malcolm X Society," established in 1970 at Vandenberg Air Force Base, cited the legacy of Malcolm X's opposition to the war as their inspiration. Malcolm X Society members claimed that "Malcolm X was the most appropriate symbol . . . of the continuing struggle for change."

#### AFTERMATH

The high-profile opposition of many African-American Muslims to the Vietnam War had deep roots in the history of African-American Muslim groups' struggles for racial equality at home and Afro-Asian independence abroad. Such concerns about the impact of UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS on the developing world would continue after the last Americans pulled out of Vietnam in 1975. But many African-American Muslims would dramatically alter their relationship with the U.S. military in the final decades of the 20th century. Even as the memory of the Vietnam War lingered among Muslim Americans as a whole, an increasing number of them volunteered for military service.

The Vietnam War had other related consequences for Muslim-American history as well. The war caused a labor shortage at home, which prompted Congress to pass the IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1965, which permitted many more Muslims from Asia and Africa to immigrate to the United States beginning in 1968. Among the immigrants were thousands of doctors, scientists, and engineers, many of whom would become key figures in the sciences, information technology, and architecture in the late 20th century.

In addition, the Vietnam War, along with the era's widespread social protest, sexual revolution, and the Watergate crisis, was interpreted by many Muslim Americans, along with other spiritually and religiously minded Americans in the 1960s and 1970s, as a sign of the nation's moral decline. Many Muslim Americans supported the idea that the solution to America's moral, political, and economic problems was a return to religious values, and along with millions of

Christians and Jews, fueled the growth of religious REVIVALISM in the late 1970s and late 20th century.

*Bret Lewis*

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**voting** See POLITICS.



**Wadud, Amina** (1952– ) *religious scholar and activist*

Amina Wadud, originally named Mary Teasley, is a scholar, teacher, and activist. Her life as an African-American Muslim woman directly informs her work as a scholar of the QUR'AN and Islamic religious traditions. As a scholar, she is best known for her feminist interpretations of the Qur'an. As an activist, she is perhaps even more famous for serving as a PRAYER leader at a mixed-gender Friday service in NEW YORK CITY in 2005.

Wadud was born on September 25, 1952, and grew up in Washington, D.C., in the family of a Methodist minister. She converted to Sunni Islam in 1972 while an undergraduate student at the University of Pennsylvania. Shortly after that she changed her name. Conversion, to her, is a continuing act of transition, where being a Muslim is an ongoing process of “engaged surrender” to God. After graduating from college, she married, had children, and then studied and taught in Libya. After returning to the United States, she divorced, lived on welfare, and had a short career as a school teacher in Philadelphia. Later on, as a graduate student from 1982 to 1988 at the University of Michigan, she began her academic engagement with the Qur'an, and traveled to Egypt to learn ARABIC. She received her Ph.D. in Islamic Studies and Arabic in 1988. Between 1989 and 1992, Wadud taught at the International Islamic University in Malaysia. She joined Sisters in Islam, a fledgling study circle of Muslim women, which became Malaysia's leading women's rights organization. Wadud helped formulate their Qur'an-based responses to shari'a courts. She returned to the United States in 1992 to teach at Virginia Commonwealth University. In 2006, she became Visiting Scholar at Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley, California.

Wadud published her seminal work, *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective*, in Malaysia in 1992. In that book, she developed a line of argument characteristic of her academic work overall. Echoing Christian and Jewish feminist theologians, she suggested that sacred texts yield different meanings when read through the lens of gender equality. *Qur'an and Woman* attempts to

provide a holistic reading of the Qur'an that emphasizes the justice and mercy of God. It deemphasizes or reinterprets particular Qur'anic verses that have been used to sanction patriarchy. In her interpretive approach, Wadud relied on FAZLUR RAHMAN, a Pakistani-American scholar. She analyzed the Qur'an as the transcendent word of God revealed in the particular environment of seventh-century Arabia. Because it is transcendent, she claimed, it has universal applications. Because it was contextually situated, she continued, its meanings must be reexamined for new audiences and new conditions.

According to Wadud, to be faithful to the revelation, new interpretations must adhere to the Qur'an's principles but not necessarily to its individual legal injunctions. As Wadud provocatively states in her later work, *Inside the Gender Jihad: Women's Reform in Islam* (2006), sometimes Muslims have to “say ‘no’ to the text” in order to live by its ethical vision. This has far-reaching practical implications, as in the case of her call for radical reexamination of legal norms regulating Muslim family life. She emphasizes the Qur'anic designation of the human being, male and female, as God's *khalifah*, “moral agent.” If God is just and humans are God's equal agents, they must strive for equality in all aspects of life, religious and profane, public and private.

Wadud has consistently combined her academic work with local and global advocacy for the rights of women, ethnic minorities, and people living with HIV/AIDS. She has spearheaded a movement for full inclusion of women in religious public life, including as leaders of communal prayers. In 1994, she delivered what she intended to be a *khutbah*, or Friday sermon, in front of a mixed congregation in the Claremont Main Street Mosque in Cape Town, South Africa. She spoke about equality of women and men in family life. She challenged Muslim orthodoxy further by leading a mixed-gender Friday prayer service in March 2005 in New York City. Local mosques approached by the organizers of this event declined to cooperate. The service instead was held in Manhattan at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine. It stirred international controversy, with many Muslim authorities asserting that traditionally only men can lead mixed-gender

prayers. To Wadud, however, this was a logical continuation of her interpretation of the Qur'an. In her sermon, she once again reminded Muslims about the equality of human beings in the eyes of God. With the act of leading this prayer, she sought to establish a precedent against exclusion of women from public religious roles, including the most visible role of a congregational prayer leader.

The impact of Wadud's struggle for gender equality—what she calls her “gender jihad”—goes far beyond these more controversial activities. Perhaps most important is her contribution in putting gender at the top of the Muslim-American agenda. She is one of the leading reminders of the turn Muslim feminists have made away from secular approaches toward finding gender equality within the Islamic tradition. Wadud has been an American voice in international Muslim debates on women's rights. Other Muslims, women and men, scholars and everyday interpreters, have emulated her efforts of reading the Qur'an as a liberating text.

Timur Yuskaev

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### Wahhabism

Wahhabism is a major reform movement in Saudi Arabia founded by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–87), a Muslim religious scholar with whom the Saudi extended family made a strategic alliance in order to spread its political domains in the 18th century. The term *Wahhabism* was created by outsiders, in particular the opponents of this movement. Saudis themselves have refused to be labeled Wahhabi. The followers prefer the term *al-muwahhidun*, or Unitarians, or *ahl al-tawhid*, the people of Divine unity.

Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, a trained scholar, writer, and jurist, believed that correct belief (or orthodoxy) must be accompanied by correct behavior (orthopraxy) in both private and public life. He stressed the doctrine of *tawhid*, or monotheism, and condemned many popular Muslim religious practices, especially those associated with Sufism, as impermissible innovations to God's revelations in the QUR'AN and to the sunna, or traditions of the prophet Muhammad. Sometimes called a “puritan” by outsiders, al-Wahhab believed that a moral revival and by extension

a social revival depended upon the stricter and more disciplined adherence to Islam. He also believed that Islamic scriptures should be read literally and that Islam, properly practiced, offered the sole path to salvation.

Like SALAFI MUSLIMS, Wahhabi Muslims have sought to “purify” Islam and to follow strictly the practices of the *salaf*, or pious Muslim ancestors who lived in the seventh century. But Salafis, in general, have not automatically followed FATWAS issued by Saudi religious authorities, instead choosing the guidance of religious leaders in Jordan, Yemen, Syria, and Egypt. While the Wahhabis have considered themselves to be Salafis, some scholars differentiate them by emphasizing that Wahhabism is the more conservative form of Salafism and that Wahhabism is a term that has been used to identify Salafi movements in Saudi Arabia.

Because Osama bin Laden is a Saudi citizen—and because 15 of the 19 al-Qaeda members who staged the terrorist attacks on SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, were Saudis as well—it is sometimes assumed their violent interpretation of Islam is a product of Wahhabism. However, the root of bin Laden's violent ideology, especially global jihad (meaning struggle or war) and the absolute division of the world into Muslims versus non-Muslims, is based on the ISLAMIC THOUGHT of the jurist Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328), not that of al-Wahhab. After the death of al-Wahhab, some Wahhabis incorporated Ibn Taymiyya's view and became a more militant wing. Most Wahhabis, however, rejected an offensive interpretation of jihad, insisting that it could only be defensive in nature—the majority position in the SHARI'A, or Islamic law and ethics, since the Middle Ages. According to a 2007 poll, for example, the majority of Saudis did not approve of the violent terrorist activities of al-Qaeda, and 88 percent supported the government efforts to eliminate the group.

### WAHHABISM IN AMERICA

The history of Wahhabism in the United States has been influenced by the larger history of UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. U.S.-Saudi contacts began as early as 1919 when Saudi Prince Faisal and President Woodrow Wilson met after WORLD WAR I at the Paris Peace Conference at Versailles, though full diplomatic relations were not established until 1933. Both countries' foreign policies were deeply intertwined for the rest of the 20th century, as the United States became the guarantor of Saudi security in exchange for full access to Saudi oil reserves—estimated at various points to be the largest in the world. Saudi Arabia is also home to Mecca, the holiest city in Islam, and destination of the hajj, or annual pilgrimage.

Wahhabi influences in the United States first appeared during the era of the “Arab Cold War” between Saudi Arabia and Egypt from roughly 1954 to 1967. In this battle between the revolutionary nationalist forces of Egyptian leader Gamal



Abdel Nasser and the monarchical government of Saudi Arabia, the Saudi regime attempted to increase its influence in the West and throughout the world by promoting Wahhabi interpretations of Islam. The University of Medina, established in 1961, and the Muslim World League, created in 1962, trained and funded Muslim missionaries throughout the world, including the United States, and Saudi Arabia also supported the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA), founded in 1963 at Champaign, Illinois.

MALCOLM X (1925–65), a leading member of the NATION OF ISLAM, also benefited from the Saudi largesse, becoming an official guest of the state during his pilgrimage in 1964 and returning to Saudi Arabia later that year to receive missionary training by the Muslim World League. But he disagreed with his Wahhabi and Salafi allies over the best strategy for the liberation of black people: They advocated an Islamic religious revival, whereas Malcolm favored pan-Africanism and black revolution.

From the 1960s until the end of the 20th century, the Saudi government and the agencies that it supported also funded the publication of various pamphlets and books that advocated a socially conservative, often Wahhabi or Salafi interpretation of Islam. In 2000, Saudi Arabia successfully distributed 138 million copies of Saudi-approved translations of the QUR'AN to countries throughout the globe, including the United States. In addition, it continued to support Wahhabi missionaries such as University of Medina graduate Abu Muslimah, who led the Islamic Center of America (ICOA) project in East Orange, New Jersey, in the 1980s.

Wahhabi teachings about the need for Islamic reform could also be found in relatively small organizations such as the Qur'an and Sunnah Society of North America. This organization presented the view that Islam was the sole path to earthly and heavenly salvation, emphasizing the need to convert all non-Muslims to Islam. It also presented a socially conservative view of morality that included the need for the separation of men and women in public venues. Another such Wahhabi-influenced institution was the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences, an adjunct campus of Al-Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, which was established in Fairfax, Virginia, in 1988. The chairman of its board was Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the Saudi ambassador to the United States.

Saudi Arabia also provided financial aid to more than a dozen MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTERS and ISLAMIC SCHOOLS in the United States. In 1998, the King Fahd Mosque in Culver City, a suburb of LOS ANGELES, was built with \$8 million in private donations from the son of the King, Prince Abdul Aziz bin Fahd. Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation, a Saudi-based nonprofit organization, established a U.S.-based branch in October 1997 in Ashland, Oregon.

Accepting Saudi support, however, did not automatically mean accepting Wahhabi interpretations of Islam. For example, Saudi Arabia hosted many Muslim-American leaders, including W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008). Still, Mohammed, like most Muslim Americans, never adopted Wahhabism as a school of thought. Mohammed, perhaps the most popular leader of African-American Muslims in the 1980s, often disagreed with Wahhabi interpretation of various issues, such as the relationship of Muslims to people of other faiths and the relationships of men to women—issues on which he took a far more liberal stance. Unlike most Wahhabi-influenced preachers, for example, Mohammed participated in INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS that sought to respect religious pluralism rather than convert everyone to the same religion.

### AFTER 9/11

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the U.S. government suspected that some Muslim extremists had used Saudi charitable funds to support their activities and sought to expose, cut off, and shut down institutions that it suspected of possible ties. In February 2004, for example, the FBI froze the assets of al-Haramain, a Saudi nonprofit group active in the United States. The Saudi government followed suit, closing the Saudi-based foundation in October.

Such prosecutions contributed to the decline of Wahhabism in the United States during the first decade of the 20th century. In 2000, 21 percent of the mosque leaders surveyed said they or their congregations were influenced by Wahhabi interpretations of Islam. Polls taken later in the decade indicated that fewer than 10 percent of Muslim-American individuals identified with similar Salafi ideas—probably meaning that an even smaller number found Wahhabism to be attractive. There were still Muslim Americans committed to Wahhabi notions of an Islamic reformation based on the original teachings of the first generation of Muslims. But the association of Wahhabism with terrorism—however incorrect in reality—had led many Muslim Americans sympathetic to Wahhabi ideas to eschew the label.

See also REVIVALISM.

*Eva F. Amrullah*

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### **Wahhaj, Siraj (1950– )** *religious leader and activist*

Siraj Wahhaj is a leading Muslim-American preacher. He is also a community builder, serving as the imam of Masjid al-Taqwa in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, and as the head of the Muslim Alliance of North America (MANA). A husband and father of nine children, Wahhaj was the first African-American vice president of the Islamic Society of North America and, as he explained in an interview with this author, sees himself "as a bridge" between African-American and immigrant Muslims.

Born on March 11, 1950, and originally named Jeffrey Kears, Wahhaj grew up in a Baptist family in Brooklyn's public housing. He had a particular knack for religion and teaching: Encouraged by his mother, he won perfect attendance awards and taught Sunday school in his parents' church. A gifted artist and athlete, in 1968 he enrolled in New York University on a partial basketball scholarship, planning to become a math teacher.

Wahhaj converted to ELIJAH MUHAMMAD'S NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) and adopted the name Jeffrey 12X in 1969. This was a result of a spiritual and political crisis prompted by the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968. Wahhaj recalls that his choice was the Nation of Islam or the Black Panthers. He became a "one hundred percent soldier of the Nation," he wrote, selling record numbers of *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, the NOI newspaper. He studied under the tutelage of LOUIS FARRAKHAN, eventually serving as his assistant minister at Harlem's Mosque No. 7, and later as minister of Mosque No. 7C in Brooklyn.

In 1975, he followed the transformation toward Sunni orthodoxy spearheaded by W. D. MOHAMMED and adopted the name Siraj Wahhaj, "radiant light." In 1978, he attended a four-month course in Mecca at King Abdul Aziz University and returned to Brooklyn with a zeal to "teach total indoctrination in the Sunnah," or the traditions of the prophet Muhammad of Arabia. He left W. D. Mohammed's community in 1981 because he was disappointed with the pace of the organization's reform, later reflecting that he might have been "a bit impatient."

Encouraged by Sheikh Ahmad Tawfiq, a student of MALCOLM X and the head of the Mosque of Islamic

Brotherhood in Harlem, Wahhaj established Masjid al-Taqwa, which quickly grew from a congregation of 25 people into a NEW YORK CITY Muslim landmark. Wahhaj envisioned his mosque as a partner in community development. Cooperating with the local New York City Police Department precinct, the mosque led a neighborhood campaign to close down 15 crack houses in 1988. Wahhaj has also served as a police clergy liaison. In recognition of his efforts, Brooklyn borough president Marty Markowitz declared August 15, 2003, Siraj Wahhaj Day. He is also known as the first Muslim to offer an opening prayer at the U.S. House of Representatives, in 1991.

Wahhaj's primary legacy is that of Muslim-centered religious leader. A consistent theme in his speeches has been unity of Muslim Americans through uncompromising allegiance to Sunni orthodox beliefs and practices. His interpretation of what orthodoxy entails has been markedly conservative; he has been, for example, criticized for employing antigay language, which he shares with many Muslim and non-Muslim religious social conservatives. In the early 1980s, he became the first African-American spokesperson to achieve prominence among immigrant Muslim audiences. He constantly crisscrossed the country, speaking at dozens of national and regional gatherings and raising funds for countless immigrant mosques and community centers. His recorded speeches became best sellers in Muslim stores in North America and Europe.

At the same time, his activism has focused consistently on the issues affecting African Americans, reflected in his role as an architect of MANA. Taking on the legacy of the NOI's "do for self" ideology, he has preached Muslim self-reliance and pride. He has been consistently critical of the U.S. government domestic and international policies—a stance, he has stressed, that he inherited from King and Malcolm X. His critics often mention that the prosecutor in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing trial included Wahhaj's name in a very long list of individuals who might be named as coconspirators. Wahhaj, however, was never indicted or formally tied to the terrorist act. Before and after this incident, in Muslim gatherings and courtroom testimonies, he has repeatedly spoken against terrorism. After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, he called on Muslim Americans to develop more responsible language of interaction with non-Muslim Americans and to seek productive cooperation. When asked to summarize his role in the national Muslim life, Wahhaj describes himself as a teacher instructing Muslim Americans "how to live an Islamic life in this country."

*Timur Yuskaev*

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### Siraj Wahhaj

#### First Muslim Invocation in Congress (1991)

*On June 25, 1991, Siraj Wahhaj became the first Muslim to pray before a session of the U.S. Congress. Imam Wahhaj offered a prayer in the House of Representatives. The next year, the Senate followed suit by inviting W. D. Mohammed to open a session of the upper body with prayer. The tradition of offering prayer at the opening of Congressional sessions traces its roots to the Continental Congress, which in 1774 decided, after heated debate, to begin its meetings with a prayer. The House of Representatives, which was formed in 1789, continued the tradition, generally employing a Protestant Christian chaplain for the task. By the late 20th and early 21st centuries, however, representatives of all world religions, including Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam, were invited to give the prayer. Siraj Wahhaj, an African-American Sunni Muslim leader from Brooklyn, New York, was suggested by the American Muslim Council, an immigrant-led organization, as the first Muslim. His prayer drew mainly from the words of the first sura, or chapter, of the Qur'an entitled al-Fatiha, or the Opening, though it incorporates a few phrases from other Qur'anic verses and Wahhaj himself. He was welcomed to the House by Nick Jo Rahall, an Arab-American Christian Congressman from West Virginia.*



Imam Siraj Wahhaj, member, American Muslim Council, Washington, DC, offered the following prayer:

In the name of God, most gracious, most merciful:

Praise belongs to Thee alone, Oh God, Lord, and Creator of all the worlds;

Praise belongs to Thee who shaped us and colored us in the wombs of our mothers; colored us black and white, brown, red, and yellow;

Praise belongs to Thee, who created us from males and females and made us into nations and tribes that we may know each other;

Most gracious, most merciful, all knowing, all wise, just God;

Master of the day of judgment, Thee alone do we worship and from Thee alone do we seek help;

Guide the leaders of this Nation, who have been given a great responsibility in worldly affairs, guide them and grant them righteousness and wisdom;

Guide them and us on the straight path, the path of those whom Thou hast bestowed Thy favors, the path of Your inspired servants, the path of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad;

Guide them and us not on the path of the disobedient ones who have earned Your wrath and displeasure. Amen.

\* \* \*

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to welcome to the House Chamber as guest chaplain, the Imam of Masjid al-Taqwa, Siraj Wahhaj, of Brooklyn, NY.

He is the first Muslim leader to work in cooperation with the New York City Police Department, and he is nationally known for his leadership in establishing a drug-free zone in his drug-laden neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. Siraj Wahhaj works well within the community in which he was born, and where he has lived for 41 years.

Siraj Wahhaj's leadership extends far beyond his local community. In addition to being a member of the Masjid al-Shura, the consultative committee of New York City, he serves on the advisory board of the Islamic Society of North America, and is a member of the board of directors of the American Muslim Council in Washington, DC.

Siraj Wahhaj was one of the first Muslims to address Christians from the pulpit. His weekly radio program on WWRL-AM is popular with non-Muslims as well as with Muslims.

As he prayed for the Members of this body today, and the people we represent, I know his words entered the minds and will remain in the hearts of all those within the sound of his voice and the reading of his words.



*Source: Congressional Record (House), vol. 137, no. 99, 102d Congress 1st Session, June 25, 1991, H4947.*

### Webb, Alexander Russell (Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb) (1846–1916) *American journalist and convert to Islam*

Alexander Russell Webb, also known as Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb, was one of the first known American converts to Islam. His conversion from Presbyterianism to Islam in the late 19th century intrigued those Americans

who came in contact with him since most Westerners in the 1890s associated Islam with violence, the Turkish harem, and religious heresy. Webb was the first “respectable” white American citizen to establish a Muslim mission in the United States, and his journalistic writings on Islam remain an irreplaceable record of American religious history in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Alexander Webb was born on November 9, 1846, in Hudson, New York. He attended the Home School in Glendale, Massachusetts, and Claverack College in New York. He then followed in the footsteps of his father, Alexander Nelson Webb, and entered the newspaper business. Heading west, the young Webb purchased a weekly newspaper in Unionville, Missouri, and later took on a series of editorships in Missouri.

In 1872, at the age of 25, Webb abandoned his childhood religion of Presbyterianism. He had grown disillusioned with Christianity and what he saw to be its moral and philosophical shortcomings. Webb explored theosophy, a movement that amalgamated spiritual wisdom from all world religions. He also began reading about and practicing Buddhism. Webb described this period of his life as a time of intense study, and he spent anywhere from four to seven hours a day studying Eastern religions. Eventually, Webb's interest turned to Islam, which was seen by many Americans of the period as an Eastern religion.

But Webb did not convert to Islam until 1887, when he moved to the Philippines. A strong supporter of Democratic politics in the Gilded Age, Webb sought a post in the diplomatic service. In 1887, President Grover Cleveland appointed him to be U.S. consul in Manila, Philippines. This assignment delighted Webb, who thought that he might meet with Muslims from the East in the Philippines. Though his only serious contact with Muslims was through a correspondence with Indian Muslim businessman Hajee Abdulla Arab, Webb's commitment to Islam grew during this time, and in 1888, he publicly announced that he was going to convert to Islam. Webb developed close relationships with other Indian Muslims, and frustrated with the bureaucratic nature of his government post, Webb embarked on a tour of India. Webb took on a new first name—Mohammed—and transformed his appearance with the deliberate adoption of Turkish dress and hairstyle. Webb's converted zeal impressed Muslims who prized devotion to the QUR'AN and to God. His lectures, delivered in 1892 throughout India, exuded religious devotion and the hope that his audiences would subsidize the establishment of an Islamic mission in the United States. Webb believed Americans would convert quickly and in large numbers to the Islamic faith. Webb's enthusiastic embrace of Islamic law and lifestyle captured the attention of Americans, especially newspaper reporters, upon his return to the United States in 1893. Webb's deliberate refashioning of his appearance and his will-

ingness to condone non-Western traditions such as polygamy revealed his rejection of American culture and his belief that Islam provided a morally superior way of life.

Webb published the pro-Islamic lectures that he had delivered overseas, providing a defense of Islam and a critique of Christianity. Webb also increased his proselytizing efforts by founding a mission, the American Islamic Mission, in NEW YORK CITY immediately upon his return to the United States in February 1893. Webb believed that by his educating Americans about the practical benefits of Islam a large number of Americans would reject Christianity like he had and embrace Islam. Webb's optimism caught the attention of newspaper reporters, but he failed to meet his financial goals and the converts were small in number. So Webb was forced to move the mission's location in Manhattan three times in two years due to financial strain.

Webb saw potential for proselytizing when he was asked to speak on behalf of Islam at the World's Parliament of Religions, an interfaith gathering of representatives from religious traditions from around the world held in CHICAGO in September 1893. Webb presented an oddly exotic figure to the primarily American, Protestant audience. Every other representative for Eastern religions at the parliament was a foreigner. Webb, on the other hand, had rejected the predominant religion of his home country for a religious system often considered at odds with his American identity. This made Webb a mini-celebrity at the parliament, as journalists were eager to interview him, and the Parliamentary Hall was filled to capacity when he spoke. Webb gave two lectures at the parliament. His first address, “The Spirit of Islam,” included a brief history and theological lesson for his predominantly Western audience. His second lecture, “The Influence of Islam on Social Conditions,” was a description of Islam's positive effects upon the moral conditions of Muslim societies spread throughout the Middle and Far East. Webb's primary theme in both speeches was the benefits of Islam for modern, Western society. Stressing what he considered Islam's rationality and superiority in ethics, personal piety, and treatment of the poor, Webb contended that if Islamic morals were followed in the United States, many of America's social problems, such as urban poverty, alcoholism, and prostitution, would diminish.

Webb enjoyed steady news coverage of his efforts to convert Americans to Islam. Newspapers had already made the announcement of the American Islamic Mission, and Webb encountered little public opposition to his work. But Webb's suggestion at the parliament that the Islamic practice of polygamy would put an end to the immoral behavior of Americans may have hindered his ability to promote Islam in the United States. Onlookers did not criticize Webb's conversion to Islam, but there were many vocal critics of his comments about polygamy during his lecture, “The Spirit



of Islam.” Despite the rejection of his mildly pro-polygamy remarks, Webb was frequently applauded when he announced his American Islamic Mission and publication office headquartered in Manhattan, and he also received applause when he described the virtues of the prophet Muhammad and the moral discipline of Muslims around the world.

After the parliament adjourned, newspapers used a more critical tone when describing Webb’s activities. Newspapers no longer described his conversion and mission to America in relatively friendly tones, and they abandoned their depiction of Webb as a dignified and intelligent man. Webb’s attempts to relocate Muslims to colonies in the southern United States had already met reactions of doubt and even fear. The national press’s notable change in attitude toward Webb revealed the limits of the nation’s religious tolerance in the 1890s, and Webb’s willingness to adopt Eastern practices and openly attack Western traditions led some to publicly criticize Webb.

His optimism for converting Americans to Islam was not realized in his lifetime, and he soon encountered financial troubles that forced him to close his Manhattan mission in 1894 and relocate it to his home in Ulster, New York. Webb’s financial troubles increased, despite his cost-cutting, and eventually he closed the mission. He remained a Muslim despite these setbacks, and in 1898 he moved to Rutherford, New Jersey, where he struggled to find foreign or domestic funding for his Muslim-American periodicals.

In 1901, Sultan Abdul Hamid II of the Ottoman Empire appointed Webb an honorary consul general to the United States. This position provided further grounds for criticism and charges of Webb’s anti-Americanism. The former U.S. consul to the Philippines now represented the interests of a foreign nation. Webb may have caught the Sultan’s attention as the likely author of *The Armenian Troubles and Where the Responsibility Lies*, an anonymous pro-Ottoman pamphlet that blamed American missionaries and their converts in Armenia as the perpetrators of Ottoman political unrest. Webb’s position as Ottoman consul, however, was strictly honorary. He received no salary or tangible benefits for his service. Webb died on October 1, 1916, in his simple Rutherford, New Jersey, home, with little wealth.

Though his impressive legacy would not be celebrated by Muslim Americans for decades, Webb has recently emerged as a historical figure of symbolic importance in Muslim America. Many American converts and Muslim immigrants alike now recognize Webb’s role in promoting an American Islamic community. His unapologetic embrace of both his Muslim and American identities, and his tolerant and open-minded attitudes toward people of other faiths, make him a model for some Muslim Americans seeking to craft a unique Muslim-American identity.

Sarah Miglio

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### Alexander Russell Webb *Islam in America* (1893)

*The most famous white American convert to Islam in the 19th century, Alexander Russell Webb (1846–1916) defended Islam against various stereotypes that characterized the religion among his fellow citizens. He praised Islam as a progressive, scientific, and rational force for good, a religion that shared much in common with the universal values of Judaism and Christianity. In 1893, the same year that Webb addressed the World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago, he wrote Islam in America, one of the first Muslim-American publications meant to explain the faith to non-Muslims. In this excerpt, Webb explains why he became a Muslim.*



I have been frequently asked why I, an American, born in a country which is nominally Christian, and reared, “under the drippings” of an orthodox Presbyterian pulpit, came to adopt the faith of Islam as my guide in life. A reply to this question may be of interest now to that large body of independent thinkers, who are manifesting a desire to know what the Islamic system really is. I am not vain enough to believe that I am the only American in this vast and progressive country capable of comprehending the system taught by the inspired Prophet of Arabia, and of appreciating its beauty and perfection. Nor do I believe that I am so deficient mentally as to accept, as truth, a religion which no one else in this country would be foolish enough to accept. But whether those who do accept it are wise or foolish in the estimation of their fellow men, I feel quite confident that at least a few may be benefited by my experience.

I was not born, as some boys seem to be, with a fervently religious strain in my character. I was emotional in later years, but not mawkishly sentimental, and always demanded a reason for everything. I will not even go so far as to assert that I was a good boy, such as fond and prejudiced mothers sometimes point out as shining examples for their own sons. I attended the Presbyterian Sunday school of my native town—when I couldn’t

avoid it—and listened with weariness and impatience to the long, abstruse discourses of the minister, while I longed to get out into the glad sunshine, and hear the more satisfying sermons preached by God Himself, through the murmuring brooks, the gorgeous flowers and the joyous birds. I listened incredulously to the story of the immaculate conception; and the dramatic tale of the vicarious atonement failed to arouse in me a thrill of tearful emotion, because I doubted the truth of both dogmas. Of course the narrow-minded church Christian will say at once, that the scriptural bogey-man, Satan, had me in his clutches as soon as I was born.

When I reached the age of twenty, and became, practically, my own master, I was so weary of the restraint and dullness of the church that I wandered away from it, and never returned to it. As a boy I found nothing in the system taught me in church and Sunday-school calculated to win me to it, nor did I find it any more attractive in later years, when I came to investigate it carefully and thoroughly. I found its moral ethics most commendable, but no different from those of every other system, while its superstitions, its grave errors, and its inefficiency as a means of securing salvation, or of elevating and purifying the human character, caused me to wonder why any thoughtful, honest and intelligent person could accept it seriously. Fortunately I was of an enquiring turn of mind—I wanted a reasonable foundation for everything—and I found that neither laymen nor clergy could give me any rational explanation of their faith; that when I asked them about God and the trinity, and life and death, they told me either that such things were mysteries, or were beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals.

After trying in vain to find something in the Christian system to satisfy the longings of my soul and meet the demands of reason, I drifted into materialism; and, for several years, had no religion at all except the golden rule, which I followed about as closely as the average Christian follows it.

About eleven years ago I became interested in the study of the Oriental religions, beginning with Buddhism, as students of the Eastern systems usually do, and finding much to interest me in the Theosophical literature, which was not easy to be obtained in this country at that time. So intensely absorbed did I become in my studies and experiments, that I devoted four and five hours a day

to them, often taking for that purpose time that I really needed for sleep. My mind was in a peculiarly receptive, yet exacting and analytical condition, absolutely free from the prejudices of all creeds, and ready to absorb the truth, no matter where it might be found. I was intensely in earnest in my efforts to solve the mysteries of life and death, and to know what relation the religious systems of the world bore to these mysteries. I reasoned that if there was no life beyond the grave, no religion was necessary to mankind; while if, as was claimed by many, there was a post-mortem life of far greater duration than the earthly existence, the nature and conditions of which were governed by our life on this globe, then it was of the greatest importance to know what course of life here would produce the most satisfying results in the next world.

Firmly materialistic, I looked at first to the advanced school of materialistic science, and found that it was just as completely immersed in the darkness of ignorance concerning spiritual things, as I was. It could tell me the name of every bone, muscle, nerve and organ of the human body, as well as its position, and (with one exception) its purpose of function; but it could not tell me the real difference between a living man and a dead one. It could tell me the name of every tree, plant and flower, and designate the species to which each belonged, as well as its apparent properties of attributes; but it could not tell me how and why the tree grew and flower bloomed. It was absolutely certain that man was born of woman, lived a brief period, and died; but whence he came, and whither he went were riddles which it confessed itself utterly unable to solve.

“Those matters belong to the church,” said a scientist to me.

“But the church knows nothing of them,” I replied.

“Nor do I, nor does science,” was the helpless, hopeless way in which he dismissed the question from the conversation.

I saw Mill and Locke, and Kant and Hegel, and Fichte and Huxley, and many other more or less learned writers, discoursing, with a great show of wisdom, concerning protoplasm, and protogen, and monads, and yet not one of them could tell me what the soul was, or what becomes of it after death.

“But no one can tell you that,” I fancy I hear someone say.

That is one of the greatest errors that poor, blind humanity ever made. There are people who have solved this mystery, but they are not the blind, credulous, materialistic followers of materialistic creeds.

I have spoken thus much of myself in order to show the reader that my adoption of Islam was not the result of misguided sentiment, blind credulity or sudden emotional impulse, but that it followed an earnest, honest, persistent, unprejudiced study and investigation, and an intense desire to know the truth.

After I had fully satisfied myself of the immortality of the soul, and that the conditions of the life beyond the grave were regulated by the thoughts, deeds and acts of the earth life; that man was, in a sense, his own savior and redeemer, and that the intercession of anyone between him and his God could be of no benefit to him, I began to compare the various religions, in order to ascertain which was the best and most efficacious as a means of securing happiness in the next life. To do this it was necessary to apply to each system, not only the tests of reason, but certain truths which I had learned during my long course of study and experiment outside the lines of orthodoxy, and in fields which priest and preacher usually avoid. . . .

There is no religious system known to humanity that is and has been, for centuries, so grossly misrepresented and thoroughly misunderstood by so-called Christians as that taught by the Prophet of Islam. The prejudice against it is so strong among the English-speaking people of the globe, that even the suggestion that it may possibly be the true faith and at least, worthy of a careful, unprejudiced investigation, is usually received with a contemptuous smile, as if such a thing was too palpably absurd to be considered seriously. It is this stubborn, unreasoning prejudice that prevents Europeans and Americans, who visit the East, from acquiring any accurate knowledge of Mohammedan social and religious life, or of the true doctrines of Islam. The air of superiority and self-sufficiency which they usually carry with them, repels the better and more enlightened classes of Mussulmans, and what is acquired from the lower classes cannot be taken as in any sense reliable. And yet it is this class of information that furnishes the inspiration for the magazine articles and books upon Mohammedan social life and beliefs which circulate in Europe and America. . . .

My study and observation among the Mussulmans [Muslims] of the East have led me to confidently believe that it is the most perfect system of soul-development ever given to man, and the only one applicable to all classes of humanity. It is founded upon that eternal truth, which has been handed down to man from age to age by the chosen prophets of God, from Moses to Mohammed. It is the only system known to man that is strictly in harmony with reason and science. It is free from degrading superstitions, and appeals directly to human rationality and intelligence. It makes every man individually responsible for every act he commits and every thought he thinks, and does not encourage him to sin by teaching him a vicarious atonement. It is elevating and refining in its tendencies, and develops the higher, nobler elements of humanity when it is faithfully, wisely and intelligently followed.



Source: Alexander Russell Webb. *Islam in America: A Brief Statement of Mohammedanism [sic] and an Outline of the American Islamic Propaganda*. New York: Oriental Publishing Company, 1893, pp. 11–14, 23–24.

**whirling dervishes** See MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER.

### **white Muslim Americans**

Using a broad definition, white Muslim Americans include European-American converts to Islam, Caucasian European Muslim immigrants such as BOSNIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS and some TURKISH-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, and ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, all of whom are considered to be “white” according to the U.S. Census. In recent times, many Muslim Americans themselves have adopted these racial criteria, and in a 2007 Pew poll, 38 percent of all Muslim Americans described themselves as white.

However, a historical approach to the question of “who is a white Muslim American” suggests a different conclusion. Many Southern and Eastern European Muslims and Middle Eastern Muslims have faced a history of legal and informal discrimination that makes their experiences different from those of Muslim Americans of northern European heritage who have chosen to become Muslims.

In the 2007 Pew poll, among Muslim Americans who have converted to Islam, 34 percent identified themselves as white, meaning that by the beginning of the 21st century,

there were at least 200,000 to 250,000 white Muslim converts in the United States.

Their history and experiences reflect the larger story of religion in the United States since the 19th century. Like other white Americans dissatisfied with Christianity, Judaism, and other faiths, many of them have been religious seekers, searching for spiritual experience and communal identifications different from the traditions in which they were raised. As a result of their seeking, they have transformed the nature of Sufism in the United States and by the late 20th century had also become some of the most prestigious and learned scholars of Islam in the United States.

#### ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB

The 19th century was a period of religious ferment and innovation in the United States, especially in New England. New religious movements emerged or expanded, such as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons), Shakers, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Christian Scientists. Many Americans weary of traditional Christian denominations explored both these “home-grown” traditions as well as “exotic” traditions from the East, including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam. Transcendentalists and theosophists were especially interested in the “secret knowledge” available from Eastern religious traditions. They studied available texts and traveled to gain greater access to this knowledge. However, this fascination with the East also included fears and misperceptions about the politics and culture of foreign countries, stoked by travelogues and Christian missionary accounts.

In this context, ALEXANDER RUSSELL WEBB (1846–1916), a white, Presbyterian journalist from Hudson, New York, began his journey to Islam. Webb was disillusioned with Christianity, finding its doctrines of atonement—the belief that Jesus’s crucifixion led to salvation for all—and the Trinity—the belief that God was One but was also three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—irrational. He began searching for a new religious tradition in the early 1880s, exploring Buddhism, materialism, and theosophy before declaring his conversion to Islam in 1888, one year after his appointment to the U.S. consulate in the Philippines. After studying Islam under several guides, Webb resigned from his position at the consulate and began planning to serve as a missionary for Islam in America.

In 1893, Webb returned to the United States and immediately began his mission work. He founded the American Moslem Brotherhood in NEW YORK CITY and instituted study circles in various cities. He also established American Islamic Propaganda publications, which produced the journals *Moslem World* and *Voice of Islam*. His major publications included *Islam in America* (1893), which described his conversion, outlined basic Muslim beliefs and practices, and

appealed to Americans to convert. In lectures and writings he argued that the ideals of Islam were perfectly consistent with the best attributes of progressive America and liberal religion, such as fraternalism, tolerance, monotheism, prohibition, engagement with science, concern for the poor, cleanliness, and rationalism. At the World’s Parliament of Religion, held at Chicago’s COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893, Webb was the primary representative of Islam, delivering two lectures. Despite his prominence and institutional development, Webb largely disappeared from public view by 1896, after the *New York Times* published several negative articles about conflicts over his finances and fund-raising.

Webb was not the first white Muslim American—some whites converted to Islam during the course of the Barbary wars in the early 19th century—but he was clearly the most prominent early white convert. He served as a liaison between white Americans and the international Muslim community, recognized the importance of establishing institutions for community-building, used publications to target Americans by highlighting Islam’s embodiment of American ideals, and produced a conversion narrative serving multiple purposes. His work foreshadowed developments and experiences common to later converts.

#### SUFISM

In the early and mid-19th century, Transcendentalists explored Islam, among other traditions, to find sources of mysticism and meditation. Their appreciation for Sufi poets, especially the 13th-century Persian poet and jurist Rumi, in addition to Sufism’s self-reflective practices and experiential focus, provided the groundwork for interest in Islam during the 20th century. From 1910 to 1912, Hazrat INAYAT KHAN, an Indian musician and mystic, brought Sufism to the West and conducted a series of lectures in the United States. After moving to Europe, he established the SUFI ORDER OF THE WEST (now Sufi Order International). In addition to his white American wife, Khan found a few receptive audiences among college students, theosophists, and general religious seekers in America. His message focused on religious liberalism, toleration, meditation, mystical experiences, and universal brotherhood. His ideas also included a critique of American racism and capitalism. Khan’s son, Pir VILAYAT INAYAT KHAN, inherited leadership of the Sufi order after his father’s death. Vilayat Khan saw increased interest in Sufism among white Americans in the 1960s, during a new wave of religious seeking. He expanded his teachings to include psychotherapy and healing, explicitly incorporating the psychological ideas of Carl Jung. Vilayat Khan’s followers included SAMUEL LEWIS, who founded the SUFI RUHANIAT INTERNATIONAL. This group focused on dance as practice (most notably the Dance of Universal Peace), but they incorporated a blend of practices beyond Sufism.



The 1960s and 1970s produced several other prominent Sufi groups that appealed to white Americans. In 1971, a graduate student invited Sri Lankan Sufi Bawa Muhaiyaddeen to PHILADELPHIA, where he founded the BAWA MUHAIYADDEEN FELLOWSHIP of North America. Initially functioning more as a teacher and counselor, Muhaiyaddeen promoted peace, religious pluralism, and an end to racial distinctions. The order grew increasingly formal over the late 1970s and early 1980s. They incorporated practices such as the *DHIKR*, a ritualized remembrance of God, and *salat*, daily ritual prayers, which is the second pillar of Islam. Due to its explicit non-racial commitments, the fellowship has been a location for increased interaction among white, African-American, and immigrant Muslims. Another Sufi order, the MEVLEVI SUFI ORDER of America (Whirling Dervishes) was founded after Sheikh Seleyman Hayati Dede visited America during the 1970s and sent his son, Jelaluddin Loras, to teach in the West. The Mevlevi Order appeals to converts through lectures, workshops, and classes. Many women have expressed particular appreciation for their ability to participate equally in the practice of meditative whirling.

Characterizing “Sufism” among white Americans in the 21st century is challenging. The range of Sufi groups and practices has varied significantly, from the most universalistic and New Age or metaphysical to those that strictly follow the SHARI‘A, the legal, ethical, and behavioral rules based on the QUR’AN and Muslim tradition. The lines between Sufism and New Age, New Religious Movements, mysticism, religious healing, and therapy have been increasingly blurred. This has led some immigrants to critique white Sufi practices and self-identification as not “truly” Muslim.

Religious studies scholar Marcia Hermansen has estimated that approximately 25,000 white Americans practice Sufism in the United States. They tend to form smaller communities, some of which are consciously interracial, that easily adapt to local contexts. Most groups develop a blend of traditional ISLAMIC THOUGHT and practice with Western ideas and concerns. These practitioners emphasize their spiritual journeys and often believe there are multiple paths to God. Sufism appeals specifically to some female converts since it is seen as less legalistic, posits parallel rights and responsibilities for men and women, and provides women with more opportunities for participation in rituals (even among the more traditional groups). Despite small numbers, Sufi practice among white Americans has influenced broader American popular culture, permeating MUSIC, POETRY, dance, therapy, and psychology.

## THE CONVERSION EXPERIENCE

### Interaction and Organization

While Sufis were among the first Muslim immigrants to specifically focus on converting Americans, other Muslims

soon followed. Early groups included the Ahmadiyya Community in the 1920s and the Islamic Mission of America for the Propagation of Islam and Defense of the Faith and the Faithful in the late 1930s. Both groups admitted whites but tended to focus their efforts on Americans of African and Asian descent.

Declining restrictions on immigration and an even greater emphasis on organizational development in the middle of the 20th century laid the groundwork for increased white American conversion. As immigration increased during the 1950s and 1960s, more white Americans interacted with Muslims. This interaction resulted in higher numbers of intermarriages. Male international students and second-generation sons began marrying white women. These spouses were not required to convert if they were Christian or Jewish, but they were expected to raise their children as Muslims and learn their husbands’ customs, community, and religion. This exposure to Islam often led women to conversion, either immediately before or soon after marriage. This trend has continued even as the number of white men marrying Muslim immigrant women has begun to increase.

While personal interaction through marriage stimulated many white conversions, organizations provided the materials, support, and structure for more sustained and systemic conversion efforts. Most significantly for white Americans, the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MSA) formed in 1963. It provided accessible English literature to white Americans. In the middle 1970s, the MSA began to focus its efforts more specifically on non-Muslims. Targeting college students, whom they considered to be the most open-minded and receptive Americans, MSA’s missionary work expanded beyond sustaining immigrant communities. Along with the MSA, numerous local and national organizations increased their focus in the 1980s on conversion by providing personal contacts and information to potential converts. Prominent organizations in these efforts include the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) and the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA. International efforts to reach non-Muslims in the West also shaped mission efforts to white Americans. Khurram Murad, a disciple of Mawlana Maududi working in the United Kingdom, used literature and visits to the United States in the 1970s to give practical advice and theoretical justifications for engaging non-Muslims.

### The Conversion Narrative

American converts often provide narratives of their experiences. Like Alexander Russell Webb’s early narrative in 1893, these accounts serve multiple roles, including the solidification of personal identity, outreach to other potential converts, and assertions of the compatibility of American and Muslim identities. Conversion narratives are available in mission literature, scholarly analyses, and on the INTERNET. Ranging

from a few paragraphs to complete books, they usually describe converts' motivations for considering conversion, the appeal of Islam, and the consequences of their decisions. Some converts describe themselves as "reverts," reflecting the belief that all people are Muslim at birth.

White Americans offer many reasons for conversion common to other Muslim American converts. These motivations include disillusionment with their own religious traditions, positive experiences with other Muslims, and gratifying engagements with Islam in their school studies or religious seeking. Most white American converts do not emphasize resistance to racism, a prominent idea in other Americans' conversion narratives. While Islam's appeal varies among converts, their narratives often cite spirituality, mysticism, social justice, moral responsibility, family, and community as significant in their decision. Narratives also highlight the ease of conversion and the rationality of the faith (including an embrace of science) in explaining the draw of Islam.

The conversion experience often affects the outward appearance and behavior of American converts. Possible changes include restricting behaviors when socializing with the opposite sex, celebrating different HOLIDAYS, and modifying one's diet. The most visible and politically charged change is often DRESS. Many converts change their clothing to signal a new emphasis on modesty, including the *hijab*, the female head covering, and the kufi or turban, the male head covering. While the *hijab* is often portrayed as a symbol of oppression, converts wearing it risk potential violence and discrimination to reflect their new identity, indicate their obedience to God, and challenge stereotypes. These types of changes lead to a wide range of reactions from converts' families and friends. Some converts receive broad acceptance, while others face concerns or even outright rejection. While relations often relax over time, many converts experience continuing conflicts with families and friends regarding clothing, holidays, and child-rearing.

Along with these challenges, many white Muslims experience tensions regarding their place inside the Muslim-American community. Some AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS openly critique a perceived preference among immigrants for white converts. Single white Muslim women may face criticism from immigrants as competition for marriage. These women may also feel alienated since many activities for women are family-oriented. Finally, some immigrants voice concerns about the disproportionate impact of white American converts on identity and practices, including gender relations and Sufism.

#### A POWERFUL MINORITY

White Muslim Americans have been a minority of Muslim converts since the 19th century, but they have made a significant impact on Islam in the United States. They have

been Muslim-American missionaries, Islamic scholars, and leaders. They have also contributed to Muslim-American poetry, media, and the struggle for gender equality. When white Muslim-American Ingrid Mattson was elected in 2006 to lead ISNA, for example, Muslim Americans proudly hailed the event as a sign of their commitment to women's rights and a version of Islam that did not pay attention to race.

White Muslim Americans have also served as powerful defenders of Muslim interests in the United States. They have asserted the compatibility of Islam with common American values: a dedication to God and PHILANTHROPY, an emphasis on family, good deeds, and discipline, and a focus on education and religious freedom. They have publicly defended their choice to convert, stressing that their decision was rational and justified, as math professor JEFFREY LANG (1954– ) did in his memoir *Struggling to Surrender* (1994). They have also attempted to influence UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS toward the Muslim world, as can be observed in the lobbying and writing of former Nixon administration official and U.S. ambassador ROBERT DICKSON CRANE (1929– ).

White Muslim-American leaders have been a bridge between Muslim and non-Muslim Americans. After the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, for example, religious leader HAMZA YUSUF (1960– ) appeared at the White House with President George W. Bush to condemn the attacks as an abuse of Islamic religion and show Muslim-American solidarity with all Americans.

From defending the interests of Muslims to leading Muslim efforts after 9/11, the white minority of Muslim Americans has helped to shape the larger story of Muslim America. As the United States has become an increasingly important location of interaction and discussion in global Islam, white Muslim Americans are likely to continue their role in shaping the engagement between Islam and the broader American culture.

Alyson L. Dickson

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## women

The United States has long been a gendered society. A person's gender shapes his or her economic opportunities, political identity, cultural assumptions, and religious life. Like most other societies in the modern era, American society has been patriarchal, meaning that the society has been organized to grant men certain powers and privileges over women.

Muslim-American communities, like many other religious communities in the United States, have used gender as a "fundamental principle" in organizing their worship, their homes, and other aspects of their lives. While some progressive and liberal Muslim Americans have challenged the organization of the community life along lines of gender, most Muslim Americans, like Americans in general, have defended the idea that there is a "common sense" difference between men and women. What almost all Muslim Americans have agreed on was the ideal that gender should not limit a person's educational or career opportunities. Men and women may be different, most Muslim Americans believe, but they are also equal.

Though it has been often assumed that women in Muslim communities are silent and oppressed, Muslim-American women have been essential partners in the build-

ing of Muslim-American institutions and culture from the beginning of their history. Muslim-American women have often challenged the gender hierarchy of their religious communities, while also continuing to work with men to advance the interests of the entire community. Muslim-American men have not often given up their privilege willingly, sometimes preferring to speak *for* women rather than *to* them. But by the late 20th century, most Muslim-American men had begun to alter their gendered views, often accepting Muslim-American women's determination to share power and authority at home, in the mosque, and in the workplace.

## EARLY FEMALE LEADERS

Though men were the public face of Muslim-American religious communities for much of the 20th century, women played vital behind-the-scenes roles in developing and sustaining Muslim communities. This was especially true in AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM communities, who generally comprised the single largest ethnic group of Muslim Americans in the 20th century. In some instances, African-American women achieved public recognition as leaders.

For example, from its origins in 1925, NOBLE DREW ALI's MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America (MSTA) celebrated the leadership gifts of women and men, appointing leaders of both genders equally to positions on the local, state, and national levels. According to MSTA member Delores Weaver-Bey of Lockport, Illinois, the MSTA founder never told women "what we could not do." Ali dispatched dozens of followers, many of whom were women, as urban ministers to develop and head temples in both the North and the South. M. Whitehead-El was one of the three officials who filed documents in August 1928 to incorporate the national body and permit it to assume its current name. Two years later, she was promoted to the position of governor, a job that indicated authority over believers within a state or large region. Women continued to serve at all levels of the MSTA even as the organization declined in membership during the second half of the 20th century.

In ELIJAH MUHAMMAD'S NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), his wife, CLARA MUHAMMAD, was, in the words of son and successor, W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), "the glue that kept the movement together" for four decades. Soon after her husband moved the headquarters of the NOI from Detroit to CHICAGO in the 1930s, Clara Muhammad assumed the position of supreme secretary, a post that enabled her to more visibly "define, represent, and model budding Islamic womanhood," according to Mohammed. While directing the activities of men who were previously unaccustomed to taking orders from a woman, Clara became the lesser-known leader of the NOI.

In the 1930s and 1940s, NOI leaders created both the MUSLIM GIRLS TRAINING (MGT) and its male counterpart,

the FRUIT OF ISLAM (FOI). Though Clara also pioneered the Islamic school system, now named in her honor as the Sister Clara Muhammad Schools, core teachings of the original NOI implied that women's work was confined to the domestic sphere, and that strong and stable family units were primarily the responsibility of female members.

In immigrant communities such as TOLEDO, OHIO, and BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, Muslim women similarly played essential, if behind-the-scenes, roles in sustaining religious communities. But by the 1960s, several immigrant Muslim women challenged such roles and insisted on more power in determining the course of their congregations. In 1965, Aliya Hassen, an Arab-American Muslim woman born in South Dakota, wrote a series of articles for the *FIA Journal*, the official periodical of the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (FIA), at the time the largest of the national immigrant-led organizations. She insisted that Muslim men, not Islam itself, were the source of gender inequality. Later, in the 1970s, Zahia Khalil would be elected president of the FIA, the first time a Muslim-American woman had ascended to such a post.

Even as some Muslim-American groups became more socially conservative during the Islamic revival of the 1970s and 1980s, other leaders questioned the rigid gender separation and social hierarchy. In 1975, W. D. Mohammed, who took over the NOI that year, preached about the equality of men and women, announcing that he had studied the role of Arab women during the lifetime of the prophet MUHAMMAD in the sixth and seventh centuries and concluded that Islam did not justify "rigid divisions between men and women." While African-American Muslim women also confronted gender stereotypes that limited their roles to caring and nurturing their spouses and children in the domestic sphere, under Mohammed's leadership they experienced fewer gender challenges than their counterparts in immigrant mosques, especially in regard to mosque access and leadership opportunities. As with African-American Christian women, African-American Muslim women were a "backbone" of their religious communities. Thus, they rarely battled their male counterparts for adequate or equal access to space in the mosque.

### WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

As in majority-Muslim societies, the mosque has been a central gathering place for Muslim Americans. In this communal space where rituals are observed, relationships sustained and nurtured, and beliefs legitimated, Muslim-American women have confronted patriarchal gender beliefs that have limited their roles, marginalized them physically, and dehumanized them spiritually. From the 1980s into the 21st century, many Muslim-American women fought for access to clean and adequate space in the mosque as part of a larger struggle for

gender justice or what Islamic studies scholar AMINA WADUD (1952– ) labeled "gender mainstreaming," the inclusion of women in all aspects of Muslim practice, performance, and leadership.

According to "The Mosque in America: A National Portrait," a comprehensive examination of the roughly 1,625 American mosques sponsored by four organizations (three Muslim, one academic) released in 2001, most mosques are "healthy and vital." The report tied growth to "steady" conversion rates, and findings indicated that each mosque welcomed an average of 16 new Muslims every year. Yet in this report, women were said to represent only 15 percent of the estimated weekly participants at the Friday congregational prayers. The figure was surely low, given the estimated number of Muslim-American women, though it may have also reflected the nonattendance of women who felt unequally treated by their male-led communities. For most Muslims, prayer requires space for physical movement. Most women make their prayers in a space different from men, sometimes forced, sometimes choosing to pray behind curtains, screens, on balconies, behind panes of glass, or in basements or separate rooms from which they can neither see nor hear as well as men on the main floor can.

Rather than view this spatial differentiation as an act of gender modesty for all participants, a growing number of women and men characterized such practices as gender injustice. "Barriers that are placed in front of women are barriers to full participation and leadership in our communities," argues Asra Nomani, an Indian American who led a revolt at the West Virginia mosque she attends by insisting to pray in the same area with, though behind, men. According to Nomani, mosques that deny women full access place the Muslim-American community at a "crossroads," where the choices are either to mirror the egalitarian practices of the prophet Muhammad or be reduced to "the lowest fears we've got."

### GENDERED INTERPRETATIONS OF TRADITIONAL SOURCES

Another aspect of the struggle for gender justice in the late 20th and early 21st centuries was female-inclusive readings of the QUR'AN. In her books, *Qur'an and Woman* (1999) and *Inside the Gender Jihad: Women's Reform in Islam* (2006), Amina Wadud argued that the sources of Islam, especially the Qur'an, had been misinterpreted by men as patriarchal texts. Wadud insisted instead that they were scriptures of gender liberation. To Wadud, such "spiritual activism" enabled Muslim women to use the same textual weapons against gender oppression that others have employed to maintain exclusive male control over "what is considered 'Islam.'"

Alongside other scholars who have used their research in Islamic texts to eradicate gender oppression from within the Islamic tradition—a group including Lois Lamya al-Faruqi,



Fatima Mernissi, Asma Barlas, and Kecia Ali—Wadud asserted that neither Islamic scriptures nor the legal opinions derived from those sources are static. Thus, for Wadud, “rereading and radically interpreting” them are both permissible and necessary tasks to separate Islamic religion from sexual oppression. By reinterpreting the texts through the lens of God’s emphasis on justice, these scholars and activists have insisted that Islamic rituals performed only by men, such as leading the prayers or performing a wedding ceremony, could also be conducted by women.

#### MORE INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

A final part of the struggle for gender justice in the late 20th and early 21st centuries was the fight for more inclusive leadership in Muslim-American organizations. Muslim-American women assumed positions of leadership in various chapters of the MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION. Women also created female-led organizations where there would be no barrier to their advancement in the community. For example, the California-based Muslim Women’s League and the International League of Muslim Women (headquartered in DETROIT, MICHIGAN) nurtured and encouraged the leadership of women in every aspect of the community’s affairs, including women’s leadership in local mosques.

In 1998, NOI leader LOUIS FARRAKHAN promoted Ava Muhammad to lead Atlanta’s Muhammad Mosque No. 15. She became the first female minister in the Nation of Islam and perhaps the first Muslim-American woman to lead a mosque. Farrakhan later named Muhammad his national spokesperson, a position both Farrakhan and MALCOLM X once held in the Nation of Islam. While some under Farrakhan’s leadership viewed Muhammad as their imam, or spiritual leader, others, including former NOI leader W. D. Mohammed, discounted the characterization, in part because holding Friday prayers was not at the time a widespread practice in the NOI and Muhammad did not lead her Atlanta mosque in PRAYER.

When Canadian-born Hartford Seminary professor INGRID MATTSON was elected president of the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) in 2006, she became the most prominent female leader of a mainstream Islamic body in the country. As leader of the 20,000-member group that represented Muslim student, social, and political organizations and was an accepted source for religious interpretation, Mattson made public her own interpretations of SHARI‘A, or Islamic law and ethics. As ISNA president and director of the seminary’s Islamic Chaplaincy Program, she also advocated more equality in leadership of mosques and in female prayer spaces, while also defending the traditional role for men as prayer leaders.

By the 1990s, Muslim-American women were also becoming leaders in other arenas of American life. For exam-

ple, Sheila Abdus-Salaam became the first female Muslim judge to serve on the New York State Supreme Court when she was elected in 1993. Yaphett El-Amin was elected to the Missouri State House of Representatives in 2001 and came in second in her bid for a Democratic nomination for a Missouri State Senate seat six years later. Individually and collectively, in private and public settings, Muslim-American women across the nation continued to provide persuasive evidence that women’s rights were an issue facing both Muslim and American communities. Acting both individually and collectively, Muslim-American women were reshaping the boundaries of gender identities and transforming their roles and positions in the Muslim-American community.

Debra Majeed

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#### Aliya Al-Ogdie Hassen

##### “Feminine Participation in Islamic Affairs” (1965)

A pioneering Muslim-American leader, Aliya Al-Ogdie Hassen (1910–90) not only advocated for women’s leadership among immigrant Muslims, she also challenged the generational and racial divides that arose in the 1960s as many new Muslim immigrants arrived in the United States. Born on April 30, 1910, in Kadoka, South Dakota, to a first-generation Arab-American Muslim family from Lebanon, she left to attend the Briggs Boarding School in Detroit in 1925. In the 1950s, she moved to New York City, where she led a group of African Americans on a tour to meet Gamal Abdel Nasser, president of Egypt, and in the 1960s, assisted Malcolm X

(1925–65) in planning for his historic 1964 hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca. In 1972, Hassen moved back to Detroit where she became a leading figure in the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS), which supplied recently arrived immigrants from Yemen, Palestine, and Lebanon with food, housing, and education in addition to helping them utilize government social services.

*Hassen was a Muslim American who defied stereotypes and easy categorization. A religious Muslim, she regularly prayed, taught others how to wash the bodies of the dead in preparation for an Islamic burial, and went on the hajj. But she also enjoyed gambling and asked to be cremated upon her own death in May 1990, in defiance of shari'a, or Islamic law. In the excerpts below from a three-part series in the FIA Journal, an official publication of the Federation of Islamic Associations of the United States and Canada, Hassen makes a case, long before 21st-century Muslim-American feminists, that Muslim women in the classical age of Islam were leaders in public affairs until Muslim men used the Qur'an as an excuse to oppress them. They became "petted and pampered playmates," she said, only after the capital of the Muslim empire moved from Damascus to Baghdad in the eighth century, more than a century after the death of the prophet Muhammad.*



Muslim women, from the very inception of Islam, participated in business affairs, in religious affairs, in educational affairs, in the social services of their community and in national emergencies. That they also participated in state affairs is also a fact. However, it is timely to offer some evidence that even in political affairs, women were not discriminated against.

Two of the most tragic civil wars in Islam were political wars and women participated in both. Aisha, wife of Muhammad participated in the political affairs which were climaxed by the Battle of Al-Jamal, and Zainab, granddaughter of Muhammad, participated in the political affairs of the tragic Battle of Karbala. . . .

No name is more renowned among the Arabs than that of [Tamudir Al-] Khansa, as a poetess before Islam and as one of Islam's most glorious daughters after she was converted to Islam. Few women, or men for that matter, exemplify the piety, courage and love of country that this woman did.

Shortly after Muhammad's Hejra [hijra, or emigration] to Medina, Khansa came with a number of the members of her tribe to learn about Islam, and were converted to the faith. She became one of Muhammad's favorite friends. He loved to lis-

ten to her recite her poems and she loved to recite them for him. Many were the encouraging poems she composed to cheer on and encourage the men going into battle. I believe the best known of her poems translated into English, composed in pagan Arab days, is her lament for her brother, the youthful king of their tribe. Who has read it and not wept, as she no doubt wept when she composed it? Yet this woman was not to weep years later after her absolute submission to God's will, when her four sons were slain.

During the battle of Qadiysia, she had accompanied her sons to war. On the eve of the battle she exhorted her sons thusly, "O my sons. You embraced Islam of your own free will. You stand here on the eve of battle, of your own free will. I swear to you by God, the one and only Deity, that you my sons, are sons of the same father and of the same mother. I never betrayed your father, or your maternal uncle. I never allowed a blot on your noble birth, nor is there any kind of pollution in your pedigree. You know the rewards of God, for those who fight in His cause and in His behalf. Remember the life of this world is but a transitory thing in nature. But remember, the life in the hereafter is everlasting. God says in His Book.

"O ye who believe, endure. Outdo each other in perseverance and be ever ready to observe your duty unto God, if you are to succeed.

"Now then, my sons, when you awaken in the morning, be prepared to contribute your very best in the battle. Fear not. March forward without hesitation into the enemy lines and know that God is beside you. Face the enemy chiefs without fear and God willing, should you fall, your abode shall be Paradise."

The next morning Khansa helped her four sons buckle on their war gear and sent them off. They sallied forth singing her poems and her last exhortations to them. Khansa remained in the rear of the battalion along with the wives, mothers, sisters and daughters of the soldiers, ready after the first onslaught to move in and tend to the wounded and dying. Sometimes during the din of battle she could hear the beloved voices of one or the other, singing or challenging the enemy's most renowned chiefs and warriors to fight. Later, news was brought to her that all four sons had perished in the battle. She was still a moment and then said, "Praise be to God. Glory be to God, who has honored me by His acceptance of my sons, in His cause. It is now my only hope that out of His

infinite mercy, that God will reunite me with them in the abode of His mercy.” Having thus spoken she went on tending to the wounded.

Of such material were these seventh century Muslims. Such were the examples they set for the Muslims to come after them. Their deeds should have served all our women in all times. They guided such renowned women as Rabiaha, Shuhda, Zubaida, Velda, Aisha, Labana and Algaznaia. Women who lived in various parts of the Muslim Empire, from Iraq, to Persia, to North Africa and Spain. Perhaps some of them even influenced Shagarat Al-Dur, who ruled over Egypt for a time, without a single man from among the Ulama, raising a voice against her rule over men, on the grounds that she was a female.

With such impressive examples to follow, how did the position and status of Muslim women degenerate? How did it come about that the women allowed themselves to be veiled and secluded from public life and participation in Islamic affairs? Where did the vicious circle begin?

In my opinion it had its beginning after the Capitol of the Caliph was moved to Persia. By this time the Muslim Empire was far flung and every Governor of every province and all the Muslim chiefs, became a Croesus. In Persia, the sophisticated began to slowly absorb and emulate the pagan customs of the Babylonians. Women became petted and pampered playmates, instead of helpmates, veiled to reserve their beauty from the gaze of lesser beings. Soon, when the inactivity atrophied their zeal, like kittens waiting to be fed and petted, they reverted to the subservient role they had been cast into in pagan Arab days. Once more, the male was superior to the female of the species. This status was in time to be enforced upon women in every land, by their men, who copied the sophistry of Muslim men of Persia.

More damaging than the imitations of Babylon civilization and its customs, was the interpretations that men later made of Qur’anic quotations. Interpretations which made it incumbent upon women to accept their lot on religious grounds, which were alleged to be rules laid down by God, detailing the proper deportment for them. These quotations, used to inhibit and restrain women from activities common to women of the seventh century, were narrowly interpreted that they might serve the ends of the now inflated male ego. Passages that were meant to protect and avert

harm from a woman’s pathway, in the times when the Medina was a trouble spot, like Qur’an 33:59: “O Prophet. Inform your wives and daughters and the believing women that they should wear an outer cloak over their selves when traveling about, that they may be identified and not molested,” began to be interpreted to mean far more than it was intended to mean.

In the days of sedition and expectancy of war between the Muslims and the Hypocrites, a number of Muslim women going about, dressed in the revealing type dress of that day, were molested and many incidents took place. To avoid further incidences, women were advised to wear a concealing outer cloak, distinctive of respectability. Most certainly it was never intended to confine them prisoners in their home, or hooded, veiled and hobbled, away from home. The same verse is as equally protective and applicable today, as it was when revealed under the same set of circumstances . . . verses like Qur’an 24:31,

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their chastity and that they should not exhibit their beauty, except what is normally exposed. That they should draw a veil covering their bosoms. . . .”

These injunctions like the former are as good now as they were then, under the same mode of clothing, peculiar to that time. It was immodest to reveal most of a woman’s bosom then and it is still immodest today. Exposure of breasts, waists and thighs, cause men just as much temptation today as it did then and just as many women receive insults because of such immodest dress today and run the risk of being molested because of their immodesty, as they did then.

Had the style of women’s dresses been modest even in today’s standard, the admonition would not have been necessary.

The Bikinis and short shorts and skin-tight pants of today that women of ultra sophistication wear, draw lewd insults to those who wear them, as well as danger of molestation, and those who place themselves in such a position, have themselves alone to blame. Modesty of dress could have avoided insult and harm to them. But men of the day we are discussing, neglected to remember the underlying reasons for these injunctions, just as they neglected to remember that in the Qur’an 24:30, it also instructed the men to, “Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their chastity. . . .” Had not tempta-

tions been placed before their eyes by the immodest apparel of that day, they too would not have been warned to avoid sin by looking away and thinking purely, when such sights met their gaze.

Aisha tells us of an incident which took place in her home, during the visit of her step sister Asma. It seems that Asma, dressed in the mode of the sophisticated city woman, was reclining in a relaxed manner, chatting with her and Muhammad, when he finally had to turn his face away from Asma and say to her, "O Asma. When women come of age, it is no longer proper for her to leave exposed so many parts of her body." Had Muhammad believed that women should wear nun-like habits and completely veil themselves, he was most assuredly articulate enough to have said so. Instead, he simply stressed the need for adult women to attire themselves modestly—advice which holds true in every day and age.

What was the mode of dress that Muhammad thought objectionable? Several styles were in vogue in that day. One style was that typical to our screen's version of the "Belly Dancers." This costume was highly ornamented with beads, jewels, or embroidery, or plain in the case of some slaves, at the brassiere-like vest, which called attention to bosoms more exposed than concealed. Also at the waist and girdle, calling attention to waist, hips and thighs. Add to this a number of bracelets to arms and ankles, filled with charms and bells which jingled as they walked to call attention to them and you have a sight which would stop men in their tracks today, as it did then. After all, human nature has not changed that much.

This then was the at-home wear even of the aristocratic ladies. Older women added to the above costume a voluptuous, or full shift-like, low necked kimono sleeved, long MuMu [a long dress that hangs from the shoulders], which was embroidered at neck, sleeves and hem. This was made from a net-like or diaphanous material of one or two layers and worn over all. This was not always confined to older women, but to more conservative women when going about in public. From this, we may rightly assume that a need for a change in dress was called for. For it is and always has been, that through modesty of dress and deportment, that the chastity and morals of both men and women have been safeguarded.

All of these "excuses" contributed heavily towards the segregation of women from public life and secular affairs. Further, when the Emirs

[princes] and Governors of the various provinces of the Muslim Empire, destroyed the idealism and unity of Islam, with their struggle for power, the decline and fall of the Muslim Empire began. When this came to pass, it became inevitable that the keys to emancipation which freed Muslim women, be lost in the seas of retrogression. The men who were once masters of most of the known world and its seas, now added, "it's for your own protection, my dears," to the multiple excuses of the past. Protection indeed! But it happened and it came to pass that the helpmate, the Amazon, the educator, the business woman, the social service worker, the spirited companion, became the decorative but spineless hothouse flower relegated to obscurity behind veils and barred doors—a position she did not emerge from again until the twentieth century.

In this century a few brave Egyptian women, rediscovered their rights and began a stupendous fight to regain them. They were most fortunate to find exceptionally courageous and enlightened men to support them in their struggle. Thanks to these suffragists, women, in Egypt are once again participating in every field of human endeavor beneficial to God and country . . . are being employed in the Ministry of Education, the Public Health Services and all Social Services. Once again they are practicing law, medicine, surgery and entering into every scientific field to work in complete equality beside their men. This re-emancipation is not confined solely to Egyptian women. They only started the ball rolling. Now Muslim women in every Muslim land have almost totally emerged from behind the veil and the cloister and are slowly and steadily taking their rightful places besides their men, as helpmates, friends and patrons to each other.

The points presented thus far have shown that beyond a shadow of a doubt that men and women are spiritual equals before God and the law. Shown that they have equal responsibilities towards each other, the Muslim family, the community and the nation. This leaves us with a last point of contention. Which sex is "superior" to the other? What is the natural position of the sexes?

The Qur'an 4:34 states, "Men are the protectors and providers of women, because by nature God gave to men a greater degree of strength (physical strength) than women." However, translated it simply implies that men are superior to women only on a physical, or biological basis.



This makes him the “natural head” of the family. It therefore becomes his bounden duty as the sire of the family, to shield, guide, protect and provide for the family. He alone is its natural breadwinner. Therefore, it is because of this position in the human family that men became much more prominent in public life and secular affairs.

Consequently he is “superior” to women in this sense and in this sense alone.

We now turn to the natural position in which the female stars. Since time immemorial, with rare exceptions, her position physically and biologically is that of mother, wife, helpmate, supplementary guide and protectress of the home and its offspring. Her first duty is to them. However, once she fulfills this obligatory duty, if she had the time, the talent and the desire for an avocation in life apart from her immediate family, she has every right to do so according to Islam.

If this shows that men are “superior” to women, it is the only type of superiority over women, recognized by Islam. Now then, should the laws of inheritance seem unjust to women, due to the fact that men do receive twice the share of a female, this is only seemingly unjust. Actually aside from the fact that before Muhammad’s time, women inherited nothing and had no property rights, real or personal, there is a fine equity even in this law. Why? Because the male is obligated to completely maintain and provide for the home and family, out of every resource available to him, earned or inherited. This however, does not apply to women. No woman is compelled to spend one cent of her earnings or her dowry, or her inheritance, upon the family. She may do so of her own free will. However, it is not incumbent upon her. These facts erase the seeming injustice.

In conclusion, O daughters of Islam, where do you go from here? Your status and position in the faith has been stripped of the artifices which relegated you to obscurantism. Your eyes have been opened by the examples set for you by Muslims of the seventh century, who lived in the lifetime of Muhammad, your Prophet. Lived in a day when had the precedences of their deeds and actions been contrary to Islam or what was expected of them, they most certainly would never have been allowed to participate in every religious and secular affair of their times. But they were not discriminated against and therefore participated in every aspect of Islamic affairs. The beacon light which they lit and held high to guide your future, is still

re-lit. You may again follow its rays. But first know yourself.

Know your capabilities, your potentials, your limitations and your strength, before deciding what you want out of life, or what you have to offer life. If happily married and content with your role as wife and mother, be sure that this noble career as queen of your home is life’s most noble one. If married and you still feel the need or the desire for an avocation apart from the family, which can be compensational to yourself, or in the services of God, the community or the nation, as long as you fulfill the obligations to the home and family, allow nothing to hinder you from seeking it. If you are unmarried and long for a career, go forth and seek it. One day it may be greatly beneficial to family and community.

However you decide, remember as you participate in Islamic or secular affairs, of community of nation, the spirit of Islam’s “First Ladies,” will lovingly shadow you and cheer you onward towards your goal.



Source: Aliya Al-Ogdie Hassen. “Feminine Participation in Islamic Affairs.” *FIA Journal* 1, no. 3 (June 1965): 18–26.

## Works Progress Administration

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was one of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal programs during the GREAT DEPRESSION that sought to provide work in order to alleviate economic distress. Established in 1935, the WPA provided work for both blue- and white-collar workers. One of the tasks for unemployed authors and teachers was to conduct oral history interviews of various marginalized social groups within society. Two of the groups that were the subjects of these interviews were Muslim Americans and those with Muslim-American ancestry: the GULLAH people of the GEORGIA SEACOAST and Syrian-Lebanese immigrants to NORTH DAKOTA.

The book *Drums and Shadows* (1940) was a production of the WPA’s Georgia Writers’ Project. The goal of *Drums and Shadows* was twofold: to provide work for unemployed writers and to record the oral histories of the inhabitants of the Georgia seacoast, many of whom were elderly former slaves by the 1930s. *Drums and Shadows* forms the first major attempt at a public history of the Gullah culture. Although the work of the WPA writers in Georgia was in many ways superseded by other researchers such as Lorenzo Dow Turner, this oral history project succeeded in preserv-

ing many of the traditional stories of the Gullah culture. Among the discoveries that *Drums and Shadows* exposed to a broader public was the multigenerational presence of Muslims in the United States. The memory of Muslim RELIGIOUS LIFE along the Georgia Seacoast was recalled in the 1930s, as the grandchildren of Muslims told interviewers about African-Islamic traditions of PRAYER, FOOD, and DRESS they learned about in their youth.

Another oral history project of the WPA recorded the experiences of Muslim Americans in North Dakota. This project provided a wealth of information concerning the immigration, employment, and settlement patterns of Muslim immigrants from Syria and Lebanon in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These records suggest that while Muslims in North Dakota may have hated the harsh winters of the upper Midwest, they did not fear their non-Muslim neighbors or feel the need to conceal their religious faith. In the town of Ross, Muslims developed an Islamic cemetery and a mosque. They butchered meat according to rules of Islamic tradition, invited guest religious leaders to marry their children and bury their dead, and observed various Muslim HOLIDAYS, including the dawn-to-dusk fasting during Ramadan.

The efforts of the WPA writers' projects produced a vast array of data, marking the first effort to systematically collect oral histories on a national scale. None of the projects aimed explicitly to record aspects of Muslim-American life. But the data collected from both immigrants and former slaves revealed that Islam had been a noteworthy part of America's past.

Patrick Callaway

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### World Community of al-Islam in the West

The World Community of al-Islam in the West was the reorganized NATION OF ISLAM (NOI) under the leadership of W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), the seventh son and named successor of NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975). After succeeding to the NOI leadership upon his father's death in 1975, Mohammed announced his intention to lead the NOI membership into Sunni Islam, the branch of Islam practiced by 80 to 85 percent of the world's Muslims, and the Nation of Islam became the World Community of al-Islam in the West (WCIW) in 1976. His program for Sunni reform was comprehensive and sought to address all religious teach-

ings and movement symbols that were viewed as religiously illegitimate by its SUNNI MUSLIM AMERICAN critics.

When Elijah Muhammad died in 1975, he left behind one of the largest Muslim religious organizations in the United States. Valued at approximately \$60 million, the Nation of Islam "empire," which was personally owned by Muhammad, included approximately 75 mosques, a weekly newspaper, a multimillion-dollar fish import business, a small bank, trucks, a clothing factory, farms, and homes. In addition to offering its members a strict moral code, a strong sense of communal solidarity, and what members believed was the guidance of a living prophet—Elijah Muhammad—the NOI became successful because of its message of racial self-determination. Like many black organizations in the past, it stressed the need for African Americans to be economically independent from the white-dominated marketplace.

W. D. Mohammed preserved or improvised on many of these themes, though he hoped to take the organization in a radically different direction. In many ways, the conditions that helped to make the NOI so successful had begun to change. The victories of the civil rights movement, the end of legal segregation, and rise of incomes among many African Americans had expanded the black middle class, the presence of which blunted some of the impact of the NOI's radical political call for a separate black nation. Religious REVIVALISM in the era was dominated by Sunni Muslim organizations led by both immigrants and African Americans, and more African Americans outside the NOI were coming to associate with Sunni Islam.

W. D. Mohammed responded to these large cultural and social changes by transforming the NOI into a Sunni religious organization geared toward black cultural pride rather than racial separatism. He began his program of reforms by changing movement nomenclature: Temples became mosques, ministers became imams, and the Nation of Islam became the World Community of al-Islam in the West. Mohammed gave up his own title of "Supreme Minister" for "Imam," or religious leader. The name of the NOI newspaper, *MUHAMMAD SPEAKS*, was changed to *Bilalian News*, in recognition of Bilal, Islam's first muezzin, or prayer caller. Dozens of University of Islam girls' schools were renamed Sister CLARA MUHAMMAD schools to honor his mother, a key figure in the NOI's early history.

As in the past, Mohammed honored the dignity of work, the centrality of family, social responsibility, and the rehabilitation of ex-convicts. But to this list, he added loyalty to the United States. Beginning in 1976, the WCIW celebrated July 4 with patriotic speeches, parades, and articles, officially recognizing Independence Day. The NOI's former call for a separate nation was rejected.

By 1980, *Bilalian News* published the addresses of 163 mosques associated with the WCIW. One hundred twenty-four affiliated radio stations were also listed. The WCIW was

international in outlook, regarding itself as a full member of the world Muslim community. *Bilalian News* carried regular articles on what was happening throughout the globe with frequent references to the Muslim World League, the Saudi-funded Sunni missionary organization, and the Organization of Islamic Conference, a semigovernmental organization with official status at the United Nations. The paper also covered the antiapartheid struggle in South Africa, the Rhodesian Bush War, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, human rights issues, and issues on human development. Finally, like *Muhammad Speaks*, *Bilalian News* addressed family life, morality, and the arts.

From 1976 until 1985, the word *Bilalian* was used not only for members of the movement but also for African Americans whose achievements the newspaper celebrated. Almost any Bilalian "first" was reported. The newspaper's aims included addressing impediments to Bilalian accomplishments, critiquing discriminatory practice that denied anyone the opportunity to grow and develop in their "balanced human form," and supporting the financial development of all deprived communities. Some aims were specifically concerned with improving the welfare and public image of African Americans.

One aspect of Elijah Muhammad's legacy that remained central to the WCIW was his concern to encourage pride in African-American heritage. Other aims expressed solidarity with all oppressed and disadvantaged people, regardless of race or creed. At local mosques, WCIW members ran social service and welfare programs such as the Ilm Foundation, sponsored by the Masjid Ibadillah in Los Angeles. Youth leadership training, food programs, free clothing, annual health checkups, and work with ex-offenders have all characterized the organization's philanthropic work.

Mohammed became a key participant in Focolare, an international interfaith movement established by a Roman Catholic nun. Human beings, said Mohammed in 1980, were not to be distinguished by the religious label that they wear but by their moral conduct. Following his example, imams and mosques also participated in various INTERFAITH MOVEMENTS. The *Bilalian News* regularly reported on local interfaith dinners and international meetings alike.

In 1980, the WCIW changed its name to the American Muslim Mission, reflecting the growing identification as an American mission of a global religion. In 1985, the organization's national leadership council, headed by Mohammed, was disbanded, with each mosque becoming independent and self-governing. Imams were elected by mosque memberships rather than being centrally appointed. Then, in 1997, the movement became known as the Muslim American Society and, in 2002, as the American Society of Muslims. The *Bilalian News*, discontinued in 1981, was revived as the *Muslim Journal*.

W. D. Mohammed retired as president of the American Society of Muslims in 2003, establishing a new charity called Mosque Cares. He expressed disappointment that many imams had failed to gain the requisite knowledge of Islam and of ARABIC needed to convey the authentic tradition and that some opposed integration into Sunni Islam. While officially open to anyone, the membership remained almost entirely African-American. Nevertheless, he remained the de facto head of the American Society of Muslims.

When Mohammed died in 2008, the American Society of Muslims may have commanded the interest of 100,000 to 250,000 people, but its future direction was uncertain. While there were other strong leaders inside the movement, including Imam Plemon T. El-Amin of Atlanta, Mohammed had not named a successor. It was not clear to its members that the movement even needed a single leader since it had evolved into a grassroots, community-based organization that welcomed national and international ties but remained focused on the local activism and individual piety of its members.

Clinton Bennett

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#### World Wide Web See INTERNET.

#### World Trade Center bombing of 1993

On February 26, 1993, at 12:18 P.M. a car bomb exploded below the World Trade Center in NEW YORK CITY. The World Trade Center was a complex of offices, public space, and restaurants whose twin towers rising 100 stories dominated the skyline of downtown Manhattan's financial district. The structure withstood the shock even though the blast ripped a hole through four sublevels of concrete. The blast killed six people and wounded 1,042 others. The bombing was the first

successful attack by terrorists linked to al-Qaeda, an Islamic extremist group, in the United States.

### THE CONSPIRACY

Ramzi Yousef, a Kuwaiti-born electrical engineer of Pakistani descent, planned the attacks with Mahmud Abouhalima, Ahmed Ajaj, Nidal Ayyad, Mohammad Salameh, and Abdul Rahman Yasin. They came from a variety of backgrounds. Abouhalima had belonged to the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood as an adolescent in Egypt. He applied successfully for amnesty in the United States in 1986. Between 1986 and 1991 he drove a cab in Brooklyn, New York, while volunteering for a nonprofit charity that raised money for the Afghan resistance, which, with U.S. assistance, successfully expelled the Soviet army from Afghanistan.

Salameh, a Palestinian from a refugee family, grew up in Jordan. He came to the United States in 1986, where he worked at a number of short-term menial jobs in New York. Yasin was born to an Iraqi family in Bloomington, Indiana, while his father attended Indiana University. He grew up in Iraq but used his U.S. citizenship to return to the United States in 1992. Ayyad, a Palestinian raised in Kuwait, graduated from Rutgers University with a degree in chemical engineering in 1991. A naturalized American citizen, Ayyad took a job at Allied Signal, an engineering firm that allowed him to obtain some of the chemicals used in the bomb.

Yousef, who had studied bomb-making at training camps in Afghanistan, and Ajaj boarded a flight from Pakistan to New York on September 2, 1992. The two men sat separately. Both carried false passports, which roused the suspicion of customs officials in New York. An inspection of Ajaj's luggage revealed material and instructions for building a bomb and other weapons. Ajaj was arrested and sent to a facility in Queens, where he remained in telephone contact with Yousef. Yousef, traveling under a false Iraqi passport, claimed to be the victim of political persecution in Iraq and asked for asylum. Customs officials released Yousef pending a hearing scheduled for December 2, 1992. Yousef took up residence in Jersey City, New Jersey, just across the Hudson River from lower Manhattan.

Yousef contacted Sheikh OMAR ABDEL-RAHMAN, a controversial cleric preaching at the Al-Farooq mosque in Brooklyn. Abdel-Rahman, like Abouhalima, had been a member of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. He had been arrested and tortured in Egypt on suspicion of inciting the murder of Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat in 1981. Although he was acquitted of these charges, the Egyptian government expelled him upon his release from prison. Abdel-Rahman introduced Yousef to the remaining conspirators. Yousef's uncle, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, provided the conspirators with advice and \$660.00. According to the 9/11 Report, released in 2004, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was the chief

architect of the second terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.

By the end of 1992, the conspirators were assembling material and conducting reconnaissance of the World Trade Center. On two occasions, they were nearly exposed when Salameh, who served as a driver for the other members of group, got into car accidents. On January 21, 1993, Salameh's first accident left Yousef in the hospital in Rahway, New Jersey. With his neck in a brace, Yousef ordered chemicals for the bomb from the hospital telephone. A few weeks later Salameh crashed the car again as he drove Ayyad home from mapping the garage of the World Trade Center. Looking for a less accident-prone driver, Yousef enlisted Jordanian Eyad Ismoil (Ismail), an old friend. Just before the attack, Yousef mailed letters to the major newspapers denouncing Israel as a terrorist state and warning that more attacks would follow the bombing of the World Trade Center unless the United States abandoned support for Israel.

Around noon on February 26, 1993, Yousef and Ismoil drove a rented Ryder truck loaded with explosives to the parking garage under the World Trade Center. The 1,310-pound device, which Yousef and Yasin had constructed together, consisted of four boxes, each packed with a mixture of newspaper, urea, and nitric acid (fertilizer), three canisters of compressed hydrogen, and four containers of nitroglycerin. Yousef lit the fuse and fled. The bomb exploded, causing tremendous damage and widespread panic as people attempted to flee the building. Several of hours after the bombing, Yousef boarded a plane bound for Pakistan.

Yousef intended to destabilize Tower One, sending it crashing it into Tower Two. But the towers (which were constructed using the tube-frame structural design pioneered by Muslim-American architect FAZLUR RAHMAN KHAN) withstood the blast. Yousef also intended to suffocate the people inside the towers. Most of the 1,042 people injured in the attack suffered from falling debris and smoke inhalation during the evacuation rather than from the blast itself. Thick, greasy smoke penetrated as high as the 93rd floor and filled the stairwells. The blast cut off electricity, trapping hundreds of people, including a kindergarten class, in the elevators. Without guiding lights or official instructions, more than 50,000 people evacuated the building successfully.

### INVESTIGATION

Investigators recovered the vehicle identification number of the Ryder truck from the debris. Using this number, they traced the Ryder truck to a rental company in Jersey City. They arrested Salameh when he returned to the rental company to claim the deposit on the truck, which he had reported stolen. With Salameh in custody, the police had no trouble finding Yasin, who had helped Yousef construct the bomb. Yasin was interrogated at FBI headquarters in NEWARK, NEW



JERSEY. He was quickly released and allowed to return to Iraq, apparently after providing extensive information about the bombing. After the second attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, the FBI placed Yasin on its list of Most Wanted Terrorists.

Salameh, Abouhalima, Ayyad, and Ajaj went on trial later in the year and, found guilty, were sentenced to life imprisonment in May 1994 for their roles in the World Trade Center bombing. On February 7, 1995, Pakistani intelligence agents and members of the American Diplomatic Security Service arrested Yousef in Islamabad, Pakistan. Yousef was tried in a U.S. District Court in New York, and on September 5, 1996, Judge Kevin Duffy sentenced Yousef to life in prison for his role in the aborted Bojinka plot, a plot to blow up 11 airplanes en route from Asia to the United States. On November 12, 1997, Yousef was also found guilty of "seditious conspiracy" for the World Trade Center bombing. The Jordanian government extradited Eyad Ismoil, who had driven the Ryder truck to the World Trade Center, to the United States. On April 3, 1998, Eyad was sentenced to 210 years in prison.

#### MUSLIM-AMERICAN RESPONSE

The AMERICAN MUSLIM COUNCIL and other Muslim-American agencies immediately condemned the attack as an unjustified assault on a nation where Muslims live in peace and security. The AMERICAN-ARAB ANTI-DISCRIMINATION COMMITTEE urged Americans not to blame all Arabs for the actions of a few. Fearing a rise in violence against Arabs and Muslims, the Muslim community condemned the bombing while inviting the media to present a complex view of Islam. At the same time, they called for greater attention to the grievances that apparently inspired the attack, including the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

*Sonja Spear with John Schruppf*

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**World's Fair** See COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION OF 1893.

#### World War I

Though World War I was fought mainly in Europe from 1914 to 1918 and U.S. troops entered the "Great War" only in 1917, about a year and a half before it ended, the war had a critical impact on the unfolding history of Muslim America.

Hundreds, if not thousands of Muslim Americans, mostly ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS, fought in the war as part of the American Expeditionary Force. According to the War Department, at least 13,965 or 7 percent of Syrian Americans served in uniform. Of these, 10 percent or more were Muslims. In North Dakota, where approximately one-third of all Arab Americans were Muslims, at least one-quarter of Syrian-American troops were Muslim. They included Private Omer Otmen, a 29-year-old who was inducted into the army on April 29, 1918, and sent to Camp Dodge, Iowa, where he was assigned to Company I of the 350th Infantry. He was deployed overseas from July 6, 1918, to June 7, 1919, and was present during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, a bloody 1918 battle that pitted American and other allied troops against German forces and resulted in 125,000 American casualties. Otmen survived and was discharged on June 14, 1919.

The impact of the war on Arab-American Muslim identity was profound. Immigration from the Middle East and Southeastern Europe, lands controlled by the Ottoman Empire, came to a virtual halt after the beginning of the war in 1914. According to historian Philip Hitti, Arab Americans began to think of themselves less as visitors and more as permanent residents and citizens of the United States. U.S. patriotism among the new immigrants increased as Arab Americans on the home front supported the war effort. In Quincy, Massachusetts, Hitti wrote, a group of Syrian Americans that likely included at least some Muslims built ships, establishing a world record for "driving 2,805 oil-tight rivets into the hull of a steel ship in a nine-hour stretch." In the New York areas, 4,800 Arab Americans purchased war bonds worth \$1.2 million.

Though there were very few Muslim-American converts to Islam at the time, U.S. participation in the war also fueled the social conditions and political environment in which hundreds, if not thousands, of African Americans would become Muslims in the 1920s. This was one of the unforeseen consequences of the war. Black soldiers served in a war that President Woodrow Wilson had said would make the world "safe for democracy." As African-American leaders such as W. E. B. DuBois closed ranks to support the United States, they also expected that African-American involvement in a campaign for democracy would lead to racial equality in the United States.

Pan-African Muslim intellectual DUSÉ MOHAMED ALI (1866–1945), editor of the *African Times and Orient Review*, wrote in 1918 that "President Wilson will be forced to see that those men who have fought for the freedom of small nationalities in Europe and elsewhere shall not be denied that freedom to which they are so justly entitled in the United States." The hopes of African-American troops for equality were high, especially for those who had served alongside French troops who treated them with relative respect.

Such expectations went unfulfilled. The UNITED STATES MILITARY remained segregated during the war, and when black soldiers returned from the fight in 1919, they discovered that little had changed in American race relations. They organized politically, lending support to the call of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) for racial self-determination and emigration to a free Africa. Muslim intellectuals such as Dusé Mohamed Ali, who by 1922 had become foreign affairs correspondent for the UNIA's *Negro World*, urged African Americans to cultivate political relationships with other "colored races" seeking freedom from colonization in Africa and Asia. Ali's linking of black hopes to Asian and African independence had ripples in African-American RELIGIOUS LIFE as well. During the 1920s and early 1930s, AHMADI MUSLIM missionary Muhammad Sadiq, MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America founder NOBLE DREW ALI, and NATION OF ISLAM founder W. D. FARD urged African Americans to practice Islam, which, they said, was a rightful religious inheritance that offered black people freedom and equality—unlike the Christianity of white Americans.

Though World War I did not directly cause the flowering of Islam among African Americans, it unleashed a series of events and conditions that led some African Americans to associate Islam with political freedom and cultural pride. World War I had a different effect among Arab Americans, many of whom came to associate more closely with the United States as a result of the war. In both cases, the war altered the course of Muslim-American history.

*Edward E. Curtis IV*

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## World War II

World War II, fought primarily by the Axis powers of Germany and Japan against the Allied powers of the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the French resistance from 1939 to 1945, had important repercussions for Muslim-American history. As in WORLD WAR I, the implications of the war, which the United States entered in 1941, were neither uniform nor predictable for Muslim Americans. On the one hand, the war provided an opportunity for both foreign-born and native-born ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIMS

and other immigrant Muslims to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States. On the other hand, some of black America's most vociferous opponents to U.S. participation were AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS who sided with the Empire of Japan.

Though no reliable estimate exists on the number of Muslims who volunteered to serve in the UNITED STATES MILITARY during World War II, at least 1,555 men and women with identifiably Muslim names volunteered. This estimate of those who served is likely low, because it does not include African-American Muslims with non-Muslim names and Muslim immigrants who had adopted Anglo-sounding names. Perhaps as many as 5,000 or more Muslims served in the war. Of these, 58 had the name Muhammad, spelled in 17 different ways. Ally A. Mohammed, for example, whose race was classified as "Native American" in enlistment records, signed up on July 20, 1942, when he was 33 or 34. He was a divorced waiter from Louisiana with a grade-school education. Shrieff Mohammed from NEW YORK CITY, who likely emigrated from South Asia, enlisted on February 6, 1943. This 37- or 38-year old had little education, no listed occupation, and did not yet have American citizenship.

Enlisting on April 20, 1943, John R. Omar (1924–2007), the son of Syrian-Lebanese immigrant Mohammed Omar and a resident of Quincy, Massachusetts, served as a top turret gunner on a B-24 Liberator bomber. Assigned to the 491st bombardment group of the Eighth Air Force in Europe, Omar participated in 29 missions, including the Battle of the Bulge (1944–45), a German offensive that resulted in a decisive Allied victory. During a mission over Madgeburg, Germany, Omar managed to open his B-24's bomb doors manually after the hydraulic system was damaged by German anti-aircraft fire. While doing so, he was hit by shrapnel in his right foot. He was later awarded a Purple Heart medal whose citation read: "For meritorious achievement in accomplishing aerial operations missions over enemy-occupied Continental Europe, Omar's actions reflect great credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States." After the war, Sergeant Omar founded Omar's Auto Body Shop in Quincy, a business he operated for more than five decades until his retirement in 1989. He was also a member of the Islamic Center of New England and later adopted the title Haj to indicate that he had performed the PILGRIMAGE to Mecca.

Arab-American Muslim Abdullah Igram of CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, enlisted on December 4, 1942, and was stationed in the Philippines until the end of the war. Returning home to Iowa in 1946, Igram joined other Muslim-American leaders in asserting that their participation in the war was evidence that Islam deserved to be recognized as a legitimately American religion. In 1952, he founded the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, and in 1953 Igram petitioned the

Eisenhower administration to recognize the right of Muslims in the military to indicate their religious identity on their identification tags, or dog tags. In the wake of World War II and the burgeoning cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union, immigrant mosque-goers in Toledo, Ohio, also stressed the ideological parallels between Islamic and American values, seeing them as complementary and mutually reinforcing. It has also been argued by scholars of Arab-American history that after World War II, Arab Americans were increasingly identified as having white ETHNICITY, which was the ultimate sign of acceptance as a mainstream American community.

Among African-American Muslims, World War II had far different repercussions. Muslim-American leaders such as WALI AKRAM (1904–94) apparently encouraged his congregants in CLEVELAND, OHIO, to volunteer for the armed services, and members of the ADDEYNU ALLAHE UNIVERSAL ARABIC ASSOCIATION used their wages from work at war-related industries around Buffalo, New York, to develop their Muslim community in West Valley, New York. However, black Muslim leaders such as ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975), leader of the NATION OF ISLAM, was among the approximately 25 black leaders—Muslim and non-Muslim—targeted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for encouraging pro-Japanese sympathies among African Americans. Part of a grassroots African-American movement, these Muslims saw the Japanese as fellow people of color, hoping that a Japanese victory in the war would translate into freedom from racism and oppression in the United States. Though accused of sedition, Muhammad was convicted only of draft evasion and was imprisoned in a federal correctional facility in Milan, Michigan, from 1943 to 1946.

Soon after World War II, the Nation of Islam and its main spokesperson, Malcolm X (1925–65), emerged as powerful critics of the Civil Rights movement and U.S. FOREIGN RELATIONS. The Nation of Islam joined African and Asian leaders in criticizing the United States for its cold war policy of meddling in the affairs of the newly independent nations of Asia and Africa, citing CIA-backed coups in Latin America and the Middle East as examples of white racism toward people of color. This anticolonial stance was also attractive to Muslim-American immigrants, who increasingly articulated their hopes that the United States would support self-determination in their former homelands, and especially for Palestinians, who had been left without a state as a result of the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. Unlike Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X, however, many Muslim-American immigrants rejected the idea that America was hopelessly flawed, instead asking that the United States simply apply its principles of freedom and democracy when dealing with Muslims abroad.

*Edward E. Curtis IV*

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### **wrestlers**

American professional wrestling has long made use of political and social tensions to drive its storylines and shape its characters. In this milieu, Muslims have been typically portrayed as "heels," or villains. Like a great villain in the movies, the heel is the person the audience loves to hate. Successful heels have large fan bases and over the years become so cherished by fans that they have become a type of "babyface," or hero. Some Muslim-American wrestling fans have appropriated the negative stereotype with irony and pride, turning the heels into heroes.

In the 19th century, stock villains included the "Terrible Turks," thereby initiating negative stereotypes of Muslims within the genre. In the mid-1950s, during the height of the cold war, literary critic Roland Barthes wrote that "in America wrestling represents a sort of mythological fight between Good and Evil (of a quasipolitical nature, the 'bad' wrestler always being supposed to be a Red [Communist])." This sentiment was echoed by the Canadian wrestler Bret "Hitman" Hart, who wrote in his 2007 autobiography: "Wrestling storylines have always exploited wartime animosities: first the American good guy versus the Germans and the Japanese, and now it was the Russians and the Iranians."

The first modern American wrestler to become famous using a Muslim persona (or "gimmick") was Edward "The Sheikh" Farhat (1926–2003). The wrestler's real life identity may bear little resemblance to the gimmick he or she adopts. Farhat was born into a Christian Lebanese immigrant family in Lansing, Michigan. Beginning his wrestling career in 1949, Farhat was billed as "The Sheikh of Araby" who hailed from "the Syrian desert." Hardly an enemy of America, Farhat had served in the U.S. Army in WORLD WAR II. The Sheikh was "managed" in the ring by Ernie Roth, a Jewish American from Canton, Ohio. Roth portrayed the character of Abdullah "the Weasel" Farouk, often wearing a turban or a fez. As implied by his nickname of "Weasel," Farouk's character was also a heel, who would often smuggle foreign objects to the Sheikh. The Sheikh would enter the ring, rant in Arabic gibberish, and attempt to "maim" his opponent. Often, the Sheikh would bloody his opponent, sometimes using the foreign

objects (usually pencils) he received from the Weasel. The Sheikh would also hurl fireballs into the face of his opponent before finishing off his “victim” with a submission hold, usually the “camel clutch.” In what was an interesting prefiguring of tensions among Muslim Americans, the Sheikh’s most noted “feud” in the 1960s and early 1970s was with African-American wrestler Bobo Brazil (Houston Harris). This feud, along with other matches in the Sheikh’s career, is captured in Donald Jackson’s 1985 documentary film *I Like to Hurt People*. Ed Farhat was inducted posthumously into the World Wrestling Entertainment’s Hall of Fame in 2007.

The next major Muslim character was Abdullah the Butcher (nicknamed “the Madman from Sudan”), who began wrestling under that name in the 1960s. Like the Sheikh, Abdullah was portrayed by another Christian, Lawrence Shreve, who was born in Canada. Wrestler Bret Hart remembers his father Stu Hart, a wrestling promoter, launching the Abdullah character: “Then [in 1969] Stu lucked out, bringing in a three-hundred-pound black school janitor out of Windsor, Ontario, who called himself Abdullah The Butcher and was billed as hailing from Khartoum. I watched this monster, unlike any I’d ever seen in wrestling, sell out week after week telling violent, bloody stories. Around the house, we called him Abbie.” Abdullah became one of the most famous “hardcore” wrestlers, who like the Sheikh became famous for using foreign objects (in Abdullah’s case, usually a fork) to draw blood from his opponents and himself. Also like the Sheikh, he continued the portrayal of the Muslim character as villainous, sadistic, and brutal.

Perhaps the first Muslim character to be portrayed by a Muslim was that of the Iron Sheikh (born Hossein Vaziri in Tehran). Undoubtedly due to stereotypes, the original name of the character was Hossein the Arab, ironic when one realizes that the wrestler was not only Iranian (and thus not an Arab) but had wrestled for his country. After the Iranian Revolution in 1979, his character was re-created as the Iron Sheikh (both a play on “Iran” and to distinguish himself from the “original” Sheikh). The Iron Sheikh was also a heel, who in 1983 defeated the all-American babyface Bob Backlund for the World Wrestling Federation championship. He also teamed with the Russian character of Nikolai Volkoff, a nod to the dual threats of Iran and Russia in the last days of the cold war. In thick Iranian accent, the Iron Sheikh would usually address the crowd with the following words: “Iran, number one. Russia, number one. USA, hack phooey.” The team was managed by “Classy” Freddie Blassie, who then took on the nickname of “Ayatollah” Blassie. In 2005, the Iron Sheikh was inducted into the World Wrestling Entertainment Hall of Fame.

Another “hardcore” Muslim character was that of Sabu, originally billed as being from Saudi Arabia. The character was portrayed by Terry Brunk, who was trained by his real-

life uncle, Ed Farhat. Lest there be any doubt that Sabu was also a heel, the usual tagline applied to him was “homicidal, genocidal, and suicidal.” Sabu would often be brought to his matches strapped to a gurney in the fashion of a dangerous, mentally ill patient, his bonds loosened by his manager to wreak havoc on both his opponent and himself.

A controversial wrestler was Muhammad Hassan, played by Italian-American Mark Copani. The character debuted in 2004 as an Arab American who was fed up with the prejudice against Arab Americans since the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. Hassan would then offer praises to Allah, a practice that was protested by Muslim Americans. His manager, Khosrow Daivari (played by Iranian-American Shawn Daivari), would then translate Hassan’s words into “Arabic,” which was actually Farsi. Again, this seemed to play upon the stereotypes of those who were ignorant of the differences between the two languages.

In an episode taped on July 4, 2005, after Daivari was defeated by his opponent, the Undertaker, Hassan called out five masked “terrorists” to defeat the Undertaker. Three days later came the deadly terrorist bombings in London. The clip was shown on North American television but was removed from broadcasts in the United Kingdom. The controversy over the clip was widely covered in the U.S. media, and as a result, the Muhammad Hassan character was taken off the air. The Daivari character continues to wrestle.

Stereotypical characters are not limited to the men in wrestling. Recently, the character of Raisha Saeed, manager to female heel wrestler Awesome Kong, has been developed. Saeed is billed as being from Damascus, speaks in an Arabic accent, and wears almost a full burka covering that leaves only her eyes exposed. Ironically, the character is portrayed by Melissa Anderson, whose first wrestling gimmick was as the all-American girl, Cheerleader Melissa.

American Muslim author Michael Muhammad Knight incorporates images and characters from professional wrestling in his works. In 2005, he orchestrated the performance piece “Taqwamania 2005: The Brawl for It All” in which he wrestled a proxy for conservative Muslim-American leader Ibrahim Hooper of the COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR). Knight’s character blended professional wrestling personas such as Hulk Hogan, the Sheik, and the Iron Sheik with Islamic symbols. Knight’s manager was Rabeya, a burka’d riot girl—that is, a veiled woman connected to the Islamic punk movement—taken from the pages of his novel *The Taqwacores* and portrayed in the match by religious studies professor Laury Silvers. Inspired by the feminist Muslim potential in Rabeya and professional wrestling, Silvers went on to train as an independent professional wrestler and debuted as Mumita: The Destroyer in full *hijab* and *niqab*.

Clearly, there are negative images of Muslims reflected in the Muslim characters in American professional wrestling.



All of them are heels, and with the exception of Muhammad Hassan (who spoke of the problems associated with being an Arab American), all of them are not just anti-American but violently so. However, they may also be viewed very differently by Muslim Americans. Some Muslim Americans have also watched and cheered for the Muslim wrestlers, who were often the only Muslim characters they saw on television in the 1970s and 1980s.

Amir Hussain

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### Wu-Tang Clan

The Wu-Tang Clan is a HIP-HOP group that emerged in NEW YORK CITY during the early 1990s. Their groundbreaking 1993 album *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)* revolutionized the sound of hip-hop with its stark and aggressive production. Led by Robert Diggs, known as RZA, the nine-member group's name was inspired by a film about a powerful group of kung fu warriors, and this imagery was often referenced lyrically, along with graphic stories about street life in New York.

The group's second single, "C.R.E.A.M.," in 1994 gave Wu-Tang the financial success they had sought and allowed them to realize an ambitious business plan to secure solo album projects for many members in the coming years. The group achieved mainstream success throughout the 1990s, expanding their brand beyond music to include a clothing line, comic book, video game, and acting roles in movies and television.

The group was initially based around the energies of RZA and his two cousins, Gary Grice (GZA), and Russell Jones (Ol' Dirty Bastard). In 1981, GZA introduced RZA to emceeing and to the religion of Islam. GZA taught his cousin about the Supreme Mathematics, a Nation of Islam teaching that was adapted by the FIVE PERCENTERS, a group formed by CLARENCE 13X (1928–69). Ol' Dirty Bastard and most other Wu-Tang members claimed membership in the Five Percenters, and most had at least one alias with an explicit

Five Percenter connection, including Sun God, Shallah, and Universal God of Law. The RZA alias stands for Ruler-Knowledge-Wisdom-and-Understanding, terms referring to the Five Percenters' "Supreme Alphabet," in which each letter has an esoteric and powerful meaning. Despite their use of Islamic motifs, Five Percenters, including Wu-Tang, do not see themselves as Muslims but instead claim that Islam is a way of life, rather than a religion.

Beyond Wu-Tang aliases, Five Percenter terms and expressions can be found mixed in with the martial arts and street stories in the group's lyrics. Five Percenter references can be understood only by those "in the know." For example, the casual listener may not register the references to Five Percenters when Method Man declares in the Ol' Dirty Bastard song: "I fear for the 85 that don't got a clue." Method alludes in this verse to the Five Percenter breakdown of humanity: 5 percent righteous, 10 percent knowledgeable but ill-intentioned, and 85 percent who live in ignorance. RZA's lyrics include mentions of the QUR'AN, and the lyrics "I Self Lord and Master" and "Arm Leg Leg Arm Head" in the song to "Born a Prince" are the Supreme Alphabet meanings for the "Islam" and "Allah." Both are Five Percenter teachings on the "Godhood" of humankind.

Beyond lyrics and aliases, Wu-Tang members used Five Percenter teachings to understand everything from a member's jail time and righteous living to the timing of the release of the albums. DJ Allah Mathematics designed an early version of the Wu-Tang logo with a sword and book. The sword represented RZA's tongue, and the book, wisdom. RZA wrote in the *Wu-Tang Manual* that "it's like you either go with the book, and have it peaceful, or you got the sword. That's the same idea of the Muslim flag's sword. It's saying, 'We gave you knowledge, the Holy Koran, and we'll cut your . . . head off if you act savage.'" Later the sword and book would be removed, leaving the stylized "W" (for Wu-Tang), one of the most famous logos in hip-hop. The Islamic motifs are present but not binding for the Wu-Tang Clan. RZA claims he is not a Muslim, but that his "way of life" is Islam: "Or as I like to say, I Stimulate Light and Matter. You have to realize that *you* stimulate everything around you. Everything else is only a reflection."

Bruce Burnside

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**Yee, James (Yusuf Yee) (1968– )** *former U.S. Army captain and Muslim chaplain*

James Yee was a Muslim chaplain serving the UNITED STATES MILITARY at GUANTÁNAMO BAY, Cuba, who was wrongly accused of mutiny and sedition in 2003. His record was later cleared, and he wrote a book recounting his experiences and criticizing U.S. treatment of Guantánamo detainees.

James Yee was born in 1968 in Springfield, New Jersey, to second-generation Chinese Lutheran Americans. Yee was an excellent student and athlete in high school, which gained him admission to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. After graduating from West Point, he served briefly as

a post-Gulf War army officer in Saudi Arabia. Converting to Islam in 1991, he left the military to pursue four years of studies in the Islamic sciences and ARABIC at the Abu Nour Islamic Foundation in Syria. When Yee returned to the military, he was endorsed by the American Muslim Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs Council and appointed one of the first Muslim CHAPLAINS in the U.S. Army in January 2001.

Initially stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, Yee, as demanded of all army chaplains, counseled soldiers and families of all religious backgrounds. The aftermath of the terrorist attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, changed his work considerably, as he was asked to give “debriefing seminars”



U.S. Army captain James Yee, a Muslim chaplain who served detainees at the U.S. Naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, speaks with his wife, Huda, and daughter Sarah at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 2005. (Billy Smith II/Stringer/Reuters/Corbis)

on Islam to American soldiers and to offer guidance to Muslim soldiers assigned to overseas missions. Television and radio stations requested interviews, and Yee found himself in high demand as the “spokesperson” on Islam from the military. In 2002, he was appointed to serve as Muslim chaplain at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, where he ministered to Muslim soldiers and translators and provided for detainees’ religious needs. His most important duties, though, were to advise camp commanders on religious and cultural issues and to ease tensions between guards and inmates, for which he received praise in his performance evaluations.

In September 2003, Yee took a routine leave from Guantánamo. On his way to his family in Seattle, he was arrested and taken into custody at the Jacksonville, Florida, airport. Charged with mutiny, sedition, aiding the enemy, and espionage with potential of a death penalty, Yee was transferred in shackles, blackened goggles, and earmuffs to a maximum-security brig in South Carolina. Held in solitary confinement for a total of 76 days, Yee was subjected to sensory deprivation techniques similar to those used against the prisoners at Guantánamo.

After a month of investigation found no evidence, the military reduced his charges to “mishandling classified documents,” claiming that a list of Guantánamo detainees, their cell locations and interrogators, was found among his belongings. In the end, this material was evaluated as necessary for his job, the entire case was dropped, and Yee’s record was cleared. Yee returned to duty as a chaplain at Fort Lewis, but he put in his resignation shortly thereafter and received an Honorable Discharge in January 2005.

Yee published an account of his experiences entitled *For God and Country: Faith and Patriotism under Fire*, in which he argued that most of the Guantánamo detainees had little or no “intelligence value,” yet camp commanders routinely incited the guards against the prisoners. Yee alleged that guards taunted prisoners about their religion and that their grave mishandlings of the QUR’AN provoked hunger strikes and suicide attempts among the inmates. Yee also wrote that he arrived at Guantánamo with the hope that he would be useful to the military’s mission, but he concluded that the mission was in fact to break the detainees’ spirits. He said his mediation was sometimes tolerated but more often resented. He argued as well that the detention facility and operations at Guantánamo Bay should be closed, or at least opened to the media for greater transparency. Yee recommended that this would send a message to the world that the United States renounced torture and abuse. Yee also began to give lectures about his ordeal, religious diversity issues, and the challenges of protecting national security and civil liberties. He made presentations at many universities and on Capitol Hill to congressional staff. As of 2009, he was still hoping for an official apology for his detention but doubted

it would come. Since Yee’s arrest in 2003, there has been no other Muslim chaplain assigned to the Guantánamo staff and detainees.

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### youth

Since the early 20th century, the identities of Muslim-American youth have been characterized by a diversity of lifestyles and life choices. Muslim-American youth experience, like that of Muslim-American history as a whole, has been shaped by different religious, racial, ethnic, national, and gender identities. Some Muslim-American youth have rejected the religious heritage of their parents, while many others have attempted to merge the religious values and cultural practices of their parents with similar and divergent practices and values. For some Muslim-American youth, a blended identity has been empowering and emboldening, sharpening their sense of self. For others, it has been a struggle in which they feel caught between multiple worlds.

## NINETEENTH- AND EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY ORIGINS

Adolescence, as typically understood today—teenage years marked by the struggle for autonomy—is a largely modern phenomenon. Until the middle to late 1800s, most Americans under the age of 18 spent little time in school, if any at all, and were expected to contribute to family farming. During the 19th century, however, the U.S. economy became increasingly industrialized, and the mass migration to cities and immigration from overseas changed the structure of American families. Coupled with the rise of child labor laws and mandatory schooling, this change in American social life marked the creation of “youth” as an age group afforded its own distinct legal and social status in the United States.

Public EDUCATION, which became increasingly compulsory in the late 19th century, played a central role in the lives of Muslim-American youth. School has been a vital American institution, because, along with technical and intellectual training, schools have been primary sites of socialization for young people. ARAB-AMERICAN MUSLIM communities in NORTH DAKOTA, for example, sent their children to public schools in the early 20th century. Taught to be patriotic American citizens and to assimilate into white, Anglo-Protestant culture, Muslims such as Charlie Juma, likely one of the first Muslim Americans born in western North Dakota, learned to speak ARABIC but also began to attend the local Lutheran church and converted to Christianity. A similar result was obtained in California when in this period SOUTH ASIAN-AMERICAN MUSLIM agricultural workers married Roman Catholic Mexican-American women and left the education of their children to their wives. A generational and cultural gap was created between many first-generation immigrants and their American children, a phenomenon common in many immigrant families of whatever religious or ethnic background.

During the era of WORLD WAR I, however, Muslims, both parents and children, came to identify more strongly as Americans and with the U.S. efforts to win the war. Arab Americans, composed mostly of Christians but including some Muslims, enrolled their children in the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts, and more than a thousand Muslim-American youths joined the UNITED STATES MILITARY fighting in Europe. The sacrifice required in the war further cemented the identification of Muslim-American youth with the United States as their home country. Some saw a contradiction between their American and Muslim identities and, in some instances, gave up the practice of Islam. Others, especially Muslim-American youth in cities with larger Muslim populations such as TOLEDO, OHIO, and NEW YORK CITY, began to view Islam as an American creed, sometimes describing the mosque to their non-Muslim neighbors as their “church.”

At the same time that many second-generation Muslim-American youths were consciously attempting to assimilate into white Protestant-American culture, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSLIMS were striving to keep from being harmed by it. The reemergence of Islam as a religious tradition among African Americans in the 1920s and 1930s was defined by the effort to resist and counter white supremacy. For the African-American Muslims who joined the Ahmadi movement, the MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE of America, various Sunni mosques, and the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), conversion to Islam was not only a matter of individual spirituality but was also the basis of a movement to establish new community life and institutions, from MOSQUES and newspapers to ISLAMIC SCHOOLS, all of which were designed to instill pride within African Americans, especially youth.

## MUSLIM-AMERICAN YOUTH INSTITUTIONS SINCE THE 1930s

Since the 1930s, full-time Islamic schools, Sunday religious classes, and youth organizations have sought to teach adolescents about community norms. In public schools and in their relationship to non-Muslim friends, teachers, and neighbors, they have been exposed to a different set of standards, and through the arts youth have created new identities that sometimes resist but often blend their sense of being fully American and fully Muslim.

### Schooling

African-American Muslims founded the first institutions for Islamic education in the United States. In 1932, W. D. FARD, founder of the NOI, established the first University of Islam in Detroit. Universities of Islam were developed as an alternative education system to public schools, many of which discriminated against African Americans at the time. Universities of Islam sought to inculcate Muslim children and youth with self-esteem and good moral character. These schools taught kindergarten through 12th grade but were named “University” by longtime NOI leader ELIJAH MUHAMMAD (1897–1975) because of the high expectations and standards held for students and the comprehensive nature of the curriculum.

As the NOI community grew, so did its schools, and by the middle 1970s, there were 41 such institutions across the United States, teaching primary and secondary instruction. After the death of Muhammad in 1975, his son, W. D. MOHAMMED (1933–2008), took the helm of the community and renamed the Universities of Islam after the schools’ very first teacher, who was also his mother, CLARA MUHAMMAD (1899–1972). The Clara Muhammad Schools retained the dual emphasis on education and self-pride but also incorporated Sunni Islamic thought and traditions into classroom instruction.



Two of the most successful schools have been the Sister Clara Muhammad elementary school and W. D. Mohammed high school in ATLANTA. W. D. Mohammed high school has offered its students the chance to participate in extra-curricular activities such as mock trial, a celebrated step team, and the *Lady Caliphs*, an all-women varsity basketball team that competed for a national high school championship in 2006. After reviving the Nation of Islam in the late 1970s, LOUIS FARRAKHAN (1933– ) reestablished the Universities of Islam in 1989. Like their predecessors, these institutions have attended to the intellectual and personal growth of students in grades kindergarten through 12 in a number of cities across the country, including CHICAGO, Baton Rouge, and San Francisco.

The type of community-building that African-American Muslims embarked upon in the 1920s and 1930s has also been taken up by their immigrant counterparts. Although Clara Muhammad Schools have educated non-African-American youth, the majority of youth from immigrant Muslim families who attended Islamic school did so at schools established within their own ethnic communities. These schools were first established in the 1980s by Muslim immigrant parents who sought to address the need for institutions to help their children retain their cultural and religious identity. In addition to the inclusion of Arabic and Islamic Studies in school curriculums, these schools have enforced conservative moral codes to govern gender relations and modesty. Islamic schools within Muslim immigrant communities have grown steadily, and a number of schools, such as Al-Ihsan Academy established by Guyanese immigrants in New York City, have conducted large fund-raising efforts to support state-of-the-art computer labs and athletic facilities.

Islamic schools have become part of a broader system of institutions that help Muslim youth develop the skills to navigate being members of a religious minority in the United States. Graduates of these schools have gone on to excel at the nation's most prestigious colleges and universities, yet most full-time Islamic schools have struggled to remain open. These schools depend on tuition to operate and are often confronted with parents who are either unable to afford school fees or lack confidence in these nascent institutions.

Most Muslim-American adolescents have received formal religious education at the mosque Sunday school. Patterned on the Sunday school tradition of American Christian churches, a number of Muslim-American communities have held Sunday religious classes since the 1950s. Teaching young students basic religious duties, Islamic history, and religious and cultural etiquette, these schools attempt to protect and preserve the religious and cultural identities of Muslim youth. This is a formidable challenge for Sunday school administrators and teachers who meet with

students for only a fraction of the time young Muslims spend in the nation's public schools.

The vast majority of Muslim youth in the 20th and 21st centuries have attended public middle schools and high schools. In these settings, Muslim youth have been confronted with many beliefs and practices that call into question those norms and values they have been taught by their families and communities. As religious and sometimes racial minorities within public school settings, Muslim youth have also experienced various forms of anti-Muslim STEREOTYPES and DISCRIMINATION. In 2005, 17-year-old Hassan Rahgozar was beaten by fellow students in a California high school bathroom in a racially motivated attack. Rahgozar sued the West Contra Costa Unified School District for failing to respond to threats against him made before the assault. Similarly, Jana Elhifny, a former Reno-area high school student, was awarded a settlement in 2009 after suing school officials for not protecting her from anti-Muslim harassment.

Although discrimination has been on the rise since the attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, for Muslim youth the experience with prejudice has differed depending on their race, class, and relationship to non-Muslims. In New York City, where Muslims make up 12 percent of public school students, oral histories of Muslim high school students have revealed that Muslim students are keenly aware of and often frustrated by discrimination, but they are not paralyzed by it. They have envisioned their generation as best equipped to eliminate prejudice against Muslims and expressed a desire to work against discrimination through a network of local and national youth groups and organizations.

### Youth Organizations

Youth-oriented groups and activities have played an important role in the development of identity among Muslim-American youth since World War I. Prior to the establishment of formal youth organizations targeted toward Muslim Americans, early immigrant communities created activities specifically designed for youth. This first generation of youth activities, such as the Bosnian Women Singers Club founded by Ulfeta Sarich in Chicago in the 1930s, replicated contemporary practices of broader American society.

In the 1950s, the FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA (FIA), a coalition of dozens of immigrant-led mosques in the United States and Canada, formed the Islamic Youth Organization. The FIA sponsored summer youth camps and youth conventions in which hundreds of Muslim Americans participated. In 1957, the Islamic Youth Organization, then led by Joe Mallad and Mary Caudry (who was also cochair of the Detroit Islamic Council), participated in the annual convention of the FIA, which featured panel discussions, prayer, and evening dances.

The 1965 convention of the FIA included more events specifically geared toward youth, including a "Youth Jam Session."

All-Muslim BOY SCOUT and GIRL SCOUT troops also began in the 1970s. Drawing on sayings of the prophet Muhammad that endorsed sports and physical activity, the Darul Islam movement, a federation of African-American Sunni Muslim mosques established in 1967, created Islamic scouting organizations and a sports tournament. In the late 1970s, members of the Darul Islam established the *Jawalah* (ranger) Scouts for males, the *Banaatul Muslimeen* (Muslim daughters), a scouting group for girls and young women, and the *Riyaadah*, Arabic for sports, an annual athletic competition. Since that time these activities have been key community institutions aimed at the development of Islamic character among Muslim-American youth.

In 1978, the Atlanta Masjid of Islam created one of the first all-Muslim Girl Scout troops in the United States. In 1982, W. D. Mohammed, Pakistani-American Boy Scout official Syed Ehtesham Haider Naqvi, Boy Scout Chief Executive Ben Love, Turkish diplomat Engin Ansay, and Guinean diplomat Youssof Sylla founded the Islamic Council on Scouting in North America (ICSNA). In addition to promoting athletic and other skills, Muslim scouting has encouraged a sense of belonging and a strong religious identity. By 2006, there were at least 1,000 Muslim-American Girl Scouts and 2,000 Boy Scouts.

As religious REVIVALISM continued to spread in the last two decades of the 20th century, many new Muslim-American youth organizations emphasized the importance of religious piety and a socially conservative view of Muslim morality. Since the middle 1980s, for example, youth organizations such as Muslim Youth of North America (MYNA), Young Muslims (YM), and Muslim American Society-Youth (MAS Youth) were created by the ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA, the ISLAMIC CIRCLE OF NORTH AMERICA, and the MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY, respectively. Their organizational structure and goals, as well as ethnic makeup and religious perspective, tended to replicate those of their parent organizations. These organizations have also focused on civic engagement and religious training. Activities such as religious study circles and leadership retreats have sought to mold young Muslims into Muslim-American leaders who are fully competent and religiously grounded.

Because these more socially conservative organizations have often encouraged modest DRESS and gender-segregated activities, a religious outlook that some youth find unattractive, some groups have begun to take more open positions toward youth-oriented programs, particularly around the arts. Importantly, these efforts were preceded by other local and national groups, like those within the ministry of W. D. Mohammed that took a different attitude toward youth activities, maintaining similar notions of morality

but embracing MUSIC and performance as positive forms of youth expression.

### Art and Muslim Identity

Since the late 20th century, an arts movement has begun to flower among young Muslim Americans. HIP-HOP, which has historically been informed by notions of black consciousness and moral discipline articulated by African-American Muslims, has emerged as an important catalyst in this movement. Seen as an extension of the Islamic poetic tradition, hip-hop has become a key medium of self-expression through which youth celebrate their identities as Muslim Americans.

This budding arts movement has also created its own market and series of superstars where Muslim artists well-known in mainstream popular culture, as well as local community hip-hop artists, become icons of an accessible, affirming, and "cool" notion of being Muslim. Although hip-hop has dominated the Muslim-American popular arts, Muslim youth have also listened to and produced *nasheeds* (Islamic songs), inspired by the harmonies of R&B, and Islamic punk and country music, as well as visual and performance art.

Bringing together popular culture, religion and youth, this arts movement has underscored anxieties within Muslim-American communities about sex and gender relations among Muslim youth. Fears about premarital sex, pregnancies to unwed parents, and sexually transmitted disease have characterized the attitudes of many adults who see popular culture as encouraging immoral behavior. These fears have a particularly strong impact on young Muslim women, often placing them under greater scrutiny and restriction.

In a 2005 ethnographic study on Yemeni-American high school students by Loukia Sarroub, young women expressed significant feelings of anxiety and depression about the future as their professional ambitions were circumscribed by notions of chastity, MARRIAGE, and conservatism within their communities. The young men in this study reported no similar feelings. This particular case reflected a differing set of expectations for MEN and WOMEN that have characterized a number of Muslim communities and extended into the realm of artistic performance. Female hip-hop artists, for example, have been confronted with religious criticism and limited opportunities to perform within some Muslim-American communities because of their gender. In response, some Muslim-American groups have sought to support female performances. For example, in 2007 the Sisterhood of the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood located in Harlem, New York, and Muslims in Hip Hop, an online Muslim hip-hop collective, held a hip-hop concert at New York City's Aaron Davis Hall that featured female Muslim artists.

Despite adult fears and gender inequalities, Muslim youth have continued to participate in the arts and popular culture.

Significantly, Muslim youth participation in the arts has enabled many youth to embrace their diversity and blended identities as assets rather than abnormalities. Through artistic expression and consumption, young Muslims have defined Islam for themselves and resisted demands to conform to the ideals or expectations of adults, Muslim and non-Muslim. For example, Chicago's Inner-city Muslim Action Network (IMAN), founded by Muslim college students, has advanced an advocacy and social service agenda that focuses on empowering communities in urban neighborhoods and has also made the arts a central element of its organizational mission. The appointment of Muslim-American youth to its Board of Directors and its bimonthly Community Café showcase for Muslim artists, male and female, are just a few of the ways IMAN has challenged traditional attitudes toward youth espoused by Muslim Americans, as well as within broader American society.

### CONCLUSION

Throughout Muslim-American history, youth have been and continue to be the epicenter of Muslim life in the United States. Some of the first and most durable American Muslim institutions were created for Muslim youth, from early 20th-century associations to later 20th- and 21st-century Islamic schools. Muslim-American youth have lived in diverse contexts, yet shared the experience of coming of age as Muslims in the United States. As a part of this experience, they have moved between different worlds—public, private, religious, and secular. Through their familiarity in multiple contexts, Muslim-American youth have acted as bridges between their local communities and broader American society. Furthermore, through the benefit of living with blended identities they have charted a course for themselves and their communities defined on their own terms.

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### Yusuf, Hamza (Mark Hanson) (1960– ) preacher and educator

By the early 21st century, Hamza Yusuf had become one of Muslim America's most popular religious scholars, educators, and spokespeople. After the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Yusuf was propelled onto the national stage as a spokesperson for Muslim Americans. He met with President George W. Bush and became an outspoken critic of both state and vigilante terrorism. In his public speaking, Yusuf combined an impassioned and charismatic speaking style with substantive references to popular culture, Western literature, and medieval ISLAMIC THOUGHT. Defending traditional Islamic religious literature and teaching methods, including those in the mystical branch of Islam called SUFISM, he cofounded the ZAYTUNA INSTITUTE, which aimed to offer traditional Islamic training to Muslim Americans in order to produce an indigenous form of American Islam.

Hamza Yusuf was born Mark Hanson in 1960 to a family of Greek Orthodox and Catholic background. He was born in Walla Walla, Washington, and raised in Marin County, California. Both of Yusuf's parents were well educated and active in the civil rights movement and in antiwar activism. Hanson considered joining the Greek Orthodox priesthood until a near-fatal car accident in 1977 prompted him to reconsider his life path.

After reading the QUR'AN, Yusuf has said, he decided to convert to Islam at the age of 17 in 1977. Shortly after, he traveled to the United Kingdom, where he studied Islam and

ARABIC. During this period, he met Abdullah Ali Mahmood from Sharjah, one of the small emirates, or principalities, in the Persian Gulf. Mahmood, a religious scholar, encouraged Yusuf to study Islam in the United Arab Emirates, where Yusuf spent four years. Yusuf also traveled to Saudi Arabia, Mauritania, Algeria, Morocco, and Egypt, studying under prominent Islamic scholars who licensed him to teach what he learned. During his 10-year sojourn, he became the first American lecturer to teach in the prestigious Karaouine University in Fes, Morocco.

Upon returning to the United States in the late 1980s, Yusuf traveled widely, speaking about Islam to a growing following in Muslim communities and on college campuses. In 1996, Yusuf cofounded Zaytuna Institute, which was modeled partly on the traditional methods of studying and teaching Islam that Yusuf had learned during his 10 years abroad. Unlike some advocates of modern Islamic REVIVALISM who stressed the need to rid Islam of centuries of accumulated traditions, Hanson explicitly embraced both the classical and medieval traditions of Islam. He preserved a central place for Sufi interpretations of Islam in the curriculum of Zaytuna, located in Hayward, California, and devoted himself to translating Sufi texts, such as *Purification of the Heart: Signs, Symptoms and Cures of the Spiritual Diseases of the Heart* (2004), into English. But while committed to preserving both classical and medieval Islamic traditions, Yusuf also hoped to produce a body of Islamic knowledge that was relevant to the contemporary world.

In his early years as a lecturer in the United States, Yusuf's speeches were frequently punctuated by harsh criticisms of American culture and POLITICS, as well as other religious traditions. In a frequently cited speech he made just two days before the events of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Yusuf was quoted as saying that "a great, great tribulation" is coming to America. Yusuf is also quoted in a 1995 speech stating that Judaism is a racist religion. He has since explained, in a September 2006 PBS *Frontline* interview, that he was "infected" with anti-Semitism during his time in "the Muslim world," and has since "(grown) out of it," realizing that it is incompatible with core Islamic values.

After the attacks of September 11, however, Yusuf changed the focus of his criticism, which became directed toward fellow Muslims. He was chosen by President George

W. Bush to represent Muslim Americans in a public meeting at the White House on September 20, 2001. Yusuf accepted the invitation and arrived in typical western clothing, with trimmed beard and without what had become his standard turban. He reclaimed his given name, introducing himself as Hamza Yusuf Hanson, and articulated a message of conciliation, cross-religious and cross-cultural respect, and regret for the tone of his previous rhetoric. The October 8, 2001, issue of London's *Guardian* quotes Yusuf as saying, "September 11 was a wake-up call to me. . . . I don't want to contribute to the hate in any shape or form. I now regret in the past being silent about what I have heard in the Islamic discourse and being part of that with my own anger."

Yusuf increasingly emphasized the commonality between American and Islamic values. In the same interview he asserted, "I would rather live as a Muslim in the west than in most of the Muslim countries, because I think the way Muslims are allowed to live in the west is closer to the Muslim way." Though Yusuf did not back off completely from offering criticism of U.S. foreign policy, criticizing the use of all weapons of mass destruction, fear tactics, and racism, whether employed by states or individuals, his new focus was on what he saw as the abuse of Islamic tradition in justifying violence.

Yusuf received criticism from other Muslims for the sudden and dramatic change in his rhetoric and philosophical bent. The shock was compounded by the fiery rhetoric he used toward fellow Muslims who, Yusuf said, abused Islamic theology. Some, like Yusuf Estes, another popular Muslim-American figure, charged that, in his eagerness to appease the Western mainstream, Yusuf stretched the meaning of certain Islamic traditions and ignored others. Even so, Yusuf defended his approach and remained focused on building Muslim-American intellectual institutions that would produce an interpretation of the faith that was deeply informed by both its American identity and the Islamic intellectual heritage.

See also SHAKIR, ZAID.

Hanifa Abdul Sabur

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**Zakaria, Fareed** (1964– ) *foreign affairs journalist*

Indian-American Fareed Zakaria, a well-known journalist, commentator, and author specializing in international relations, was born on January 20, 1964, in Mumbai, India. His father was a leading politician in the Indian government and a scholar of Islamic religion. His mother was an editor for the *Times of India*. Raised a Muslim, Zakaria attended the Christian-run Cathedral and John Connon School in Mumbai, the most prestigious preparatory school in India. After preparatory school, he moved to the United States in order to attend Yale University, receiving a B.A. in 1986. He then attended the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, which granted him a Ph.D. in government in 1993. Zakaria remained at Harvard after graduation to conduct research and teach courses on political science and government.

In 1992, Zakaria became the editor of the journal *Foreign Affairs*, sometimes contributing his own articles to the journal, including “Culture Is Destiny” in 1994 and “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy” in 1997. In 1993, he published his first book, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, which examined the deficiencies and successes of democracy and democratic societies. The book, which enumerated steps the United States must take to revitalize its democracy, became a best seller and was translated into 20 languages.

In 1996, Zakaria became a contributing writer for *Newsweek* magazine, and then published his second book, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (1998). *From Wealth to Power* explored the relationships between a nation's central government and its ability to influence foreign affairs. Using examples from U.S. history, Zakaria claimed that when the federal government was weak, such as in the 19th century, the United States tended to be less engaged in aggressive foreign political maneuvers. But as the government became more powerful and performed additional functions during and after the Civil War, the United States increased its influence in foreign politics and its interests in foreign expansion.

In 2000, Zakaria resigned his position as editor of *Foreign Affairs* and became editor at *Newsweek International*. Perhaps his most influential article for *Newsweek* was his piece entitled, “The Politics of Rage: Why They Hate Us.” Written shortly after the al-Qaeda attacks of SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, the article attempted to explain how political, social, economic, and religious contexts in the Middle East led to the attacks. Zakaria frequently commented on various aspects of the war on terror, including the IRAQ WAR and the domestic and foreign policies of the George W. Bush administration.

Surveying the changes in international relations after 9/11, Zakaria's third book, *The Post-American World* (2008), claimed that the world has entered a period in which the economic and military power of the United States has ebbed and other nations around the world, particularly China and India, were burgeoning. Zakaria said that this diminution of U.S. power was not a problem in and of itself, but that continued political strife and idleness among Americans affected the quality of life in the country.

In addition to writing books and articles, Zakaria has become a television personality. From 2005 to 2007, he hosted a weekly program called *Foreign Exchange* on PBS and then in 2008 launched *Fareed Zakaria GPS (Global Public Square)*, a political talk show that examines policies and the foreign events affecting the world. Zakaria has interviewed a number of important political and public figures such as Barack Obama, Tony Blair, Condoleezza Rice, and Bill Gates.

Since the late 1990s, Zakaria's reputation as an intellectual and political expert has been recognized by numerous organizations and publications. He was recognized as one of the 21st century's most important people by *Esquire* magazine in 1999. He won the World Affairs Councils of America's Journalist Award in 2005, and in 2006 he was named one of the 100 most influential graduates of Harvard University. In 2007, Zakaria was named by both *Foreign Policy* and *Prospect* magazines as one of the top 100 public intellectuals in the world.

Zakaria has been outspoken on a number of issues but has rarely discussed his Muslim identity. In an interview with *Village Voice*, Zakaria stated that he understood certain

aspects of the Muslim world through intuition—aspects, he said, that cannot be grasped by reading books or through study. However, he did not want to become a spokesman on behalf of the Muslim world. He felt as if his world and his life are different from the Muslim world because, “I’m not a religious guy.”

Matthew Long

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## Zaytuna Institute

Founded in 1996 by HAMZA YUSUF and Hesham Alalusi in California, Zaytuna Institute has become one of the leading institutions of Islamic learning in the United States. Its expressed goal is to offer traditional forms and contents of Islamic knowledge to Muslim Americans. In 1998, the institute acquired a physical location in Hayward, California, and in 2007, with plans to found Tabari College as the first accredited Islamic seminary in the United States, it relocated to Berkeley, California.

Since its inception, Zaytuna has developed on-site courses and programs, distance-learning programs conducted online, and weekend intensive courses in various locations throughout the country, called “Minara Programs.” Its educational approach has emphasized traditional forms of Islamic instruction, including intensive ARABIC courses, introductions to the QUR’AN, the sunna of the prophet MUHAMMAD, and SHARI’A, or Islamic legal and ethical thought. These traditional subjects are adapted in order to make them relevant for the religious, political, and social contexts in which Muslim Americans find themselves. Many of Zaytuna’s learning materials including books, a journal called “Seasons,” many audio-visual materials, and several translations of classical Arabic texts have been marketed to and used by significant numbers of Muslims in North America.

Zaytuna’s success can mainly be ascribed to the charismatic leadership of Hamza Yusuf, and later ZAID

SHAKIR. In addition to these two leading scholars, Zaytuna has employed other Muslim scholars whose training in the Muslim world and in traditional Islamic sciences has formed the basis of their scholarly and instructional authority.

Hamza Yusuf grew up in a Greek Orthodox family in northern California and converted to Islam in his teens. He went on to study for 10 years in various parts of the Muslim world with traditional teachers. His definition of traditional Islamic knowledge is best described as an eclectic combination of classical Islamic doctrines, mystical interpretations, and modern Western sensibilities. Yusuf has been hailed as the leading Muslim American scholar on the one hand while being criticized for his stance with the Bush administration after SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, on the other. Immediately after the attacks, Yusuf came out publicly, in various American and European media outlets, condemning the attacks and defending Islamic doctrine and identity as antithetical to such attacks. He has also been a signatory to several declarations of contemporary Muslim scholars against terrorism and for better interfaith relations, including the 2007 “Common Word” formulated in response to remarks by Pope Benedict XVI earlier the same year.

The second-leading figure of Zaytuna is Zaid Shakir, an African-American scholar who converted to Islam in 1977 and studied for several years in Syria and Morocco. Shakir has described his coming of age during the civil rights movements and has combined civil rights and political activism with deep involvement in Muslim community-building in the United States. He joined Zaytuna in 2003 as scholar-in-residence and lecturer. Shakir has become the second public face of Zaytuna and has spoken frequently to the media, public gatherings, and conferences.

In subtle ways, the curriculum and agenda of Zaytuna represented by Yusuf and Shakir as well as other teachers at the institute have been relatively conservative on many social and political issues while supporting Sufi perspectives and an indigenous American interpretation of Islam for Muslim Americans. This includes an emphasis on the compatibility of Islamic and American values, such as democracy and religious pluralism, and the unique position of Muslim Americans under conditions of religious freedom and freedom of speech that afford them unprecedented opportunities for rethinking the role of Islam in the modern world and the strengthening of a global Muslim identity.

Juliane Hammer

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**Zerhouni, Elias Adam** (1951– ) *medical researcher, director of the National Institutes of Health*

Elias Adam Zerhouni, a radiologist, invented scanning techniques that allowed doctors to see three-dimensional representations of internal organs. He also helped to create the Institute for Cell Engineering at Johns Hopkins University. He served as head of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) from 2002 to 2008.

Elias Zerhouni was born on April 12, 1951, in Nedrona, Algeria, where his father was a math professor and his maternal uncle was a radiologist. He swam competitively while studying medicine at the University of Algiers, where he met and married Nadia Azza, a fellow competitive swimmer. In 1975, the couple moved to Baltimore, Maryland. Zerhouni completed his residency in diagnostic radiology in 1978 at Johns Hopkins University, where he was an assistant professor.

While at Johns Hopkins, Zerhouni participated in studies of computed tomography (CT scan), a technique that produces a three-dimensional image of an object from a large number of two-dimensional X-ray scans along a single axis of rotation. The CT scan allowed doctors to identify tumors, especially in the lungs. In 1981, Zerhouni became vice-chairman of the department of radiology at Eastern Virginia Medical School before returning to Johns Hopkins in 1985, when he became codirector of the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) division in 1988.

While Zerhouni was at Johns Hopkins in the late 1980s, he developed “myocardial tagging,” an innovative procedure using magnetic resonance imaging to take three-dimensional moving pictures of the heart. Using a similar imaging technique, he created a method of diagnosing breast cancer that replaced a more invasive procedure.

In 1985, Zerhouni expanded his activities from research to health policy, becoming a consultant to the White House under Ronald Reagan and consultant to the World Health Organization in 1988. In 1996, Zerhouni became executive vice dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, just six years after becoming a naturalized American citizen. In 2000, he joined the Institute of Medicine, a component of the National Academy of Sciences that offers policy makers scientific advice on biomedical science and health.

In May 2002, President George W. Bush appointed Zerhouni director of the NIH after a two-year search for a director who shared President Bush’s opposition to embryonic cell research. Zerhouni, who had helped create Johns Hopkins Institute for Cell Engineering in 2001, supported research that extended research to the less controversial field of adult stem cells. Under Zerhouni, the NIH doubled its budget to \$27.3 billion, partly with the goal of creating a complete set of three-dimensional pictures of every protein in the body as the first step toward curing Alzheimer’s dis-

ease and other disorders in which misshaped proteins play a role.

Zerhouni also fostered cooperation between the public and private sectors by creating a public database of pharmaceutical compounds and their properties. In 2005, Zerhouni responded to a congressional investigation of possible ethics violations at the NIH by banning NIH scientists from consulting for drug companies. In this period, federal support for the NIH stagnated, and some scientists complained that it was increasingly difficult to get NIH grants. In 2004 and 2005, Zerhouni informed Congress that the Bush administration’s opposition to work on embryonic stem cells was slowing scientific research. Despite this comment, which seemed to support critics of the Bush policy on stem cell research, Zerhouni remained in his post.

Before the 2008 presidential election, Zerhouni resigned his position at the NIH to make way for a new administration. In 2009, he joined the board of trustees of the newly created King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He also joined the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as a senior fellow in the Global Health Initiative and as executive committee board member for the Foundation’s Grand Challenges in Global Health program, which seeks to solve health problems in the world’s poorest countries. Zerhouni’s role has been as both a health policy and research adviser.

By the time Zerhouni stepped down from his post at the NIH in 2008, he had already amassed an impressive record. During a three-decade-long career, he had become one of the highest-ranking Muslim officials in the U.S. government, laid the foundation for future research into a number of chronic illnesses including Alzheimer’s disease, and improved the diagnosis of heart disease through his research on magnetic resonance imaging.

Sonja Spear

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**Zewail, Ahmed Hasan** (1946– ) *chemist, Nobel Laureate*

Ahmed Hasan Zewail won the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1999 for pioneering femtochemistry, an area of physical



chemistry that uses extremely fast laser flashes to examine chemical reactions in process on a molecular level. This method allowed scientists to understand exactly what happens in a chemical reaction between stable states, giving scientists a powerful tool to interrogate some basic assumptions in the field of chemistry.

Ahmed Zewail was born in Damanhour, just outside of Alexandria, Egypt, on February 26, 1946. He grew up in the small Egyptian city of Disuq, where his father worked for the government and ran a small business importing and assembling bicycles and motorcycles. Zewail completed a master of science from the University of Alexandria in 1969. He received a scholarship to the University of Pennsylvania, where he completed a Ph.D. in chemistry in 1974. That same year he began postdoctoral work at the University of California at Berkeley, where he collaborated with Charles Harris using picosecond lasers, lasers flashing at intervals of only one-trillionth of a second. In 1976, he accepted a fac-

ulty position at the California Institute of Technology, commonly called Caltech, where he has remained for his entire career, rising to the Linus Pauling Chair in Chemical Physics and to director of Caltech's National Science Foundation's Laboratory for Molecular Sciences in 1990.

In 1989, Zewail received the King Faisal International Prize for science. While at the award ceremony in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Zewail met his future wife, Dema-al-Faham, whose father Shaker al-Faham was in Riyadh to accept the King Faisal International Prize for literature. Dema Zewail, who completed an M.D. from Damascus University and a master's in public health from the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1989 became an expert in public health. The couple had four children: Maha, Amani, Nabeel, and Hani.

Zewail has devoted his career to capturing the behavior of atoms as they combine into molecules in real time. Femtochemistry, for which he received the Nobel Prize, uses ultrafast lasers to take "snapshots" of chemical reactions at



In 1999, Ahmed Hasan Zewail received the Nobel Prize in chemistry for his use of extremely fast laser flashes to examine chemical reactions on a molecular level. (Tobias Rostlund, Pool/AP Images)



intervals of one femtosecond—one-millionth of a billionth of a second. To explain just how short a femtosecond is, Zewail's research team offered a helpful comparison: Though it takes one second for light to travel 180,000 miles—about three-quarters of the distance from the Earth to the Moon—it takes just one femtosecond for light to travel 1 percent of the thickness of a human hair. Taking “snapshots” at these intervals, Zewail's team developed a portrait of how atoms moved, creating a four-dimensional picture of atoms in both space and time. Zewail's work allowed scientists to see molecular bonds form and break in real time, on the same timescale that the reaction took place.

Most recently, Zewail has used this technique to study the workings of cells as they manufacture proteins. Under Zewail's direction, the Laboratory for Molecular Sciences has used femtochemistry to study how electrons move in DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid, the material that contains the genetic instructions used in the development of living organisms). This research promises insight into the ways in which DNA is damaged and repaired.

In a productive scholarly career, Zewail has written 13 books. He has also led a team of 250 researchers who have collectively published more than 500 papers. Zewail's most recent efforts to understand chemical changes in motion use the electron microscope.

Although Zewail became a naturalized American citizen in 1982, he has maintained his Egyptian citizenship and his connections to Egypt and the Arab Middle East. He offered a portion of his \$937,300 Nobel Prize to his former school, now the Dr. Ahmed H. Zewail High School, in Disuq to improve its science instruction. He has also published works of popular science in ARABIC, including *Age of Science* (2005), *Time* (2007), and *Dialogue of Civilizations* (2007).

In 2001, Zewail, a trustee of the American University in Cairo, created the Ahmed H. Zewail Prize for graduating seniors who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to scientific inquiry and humanistic values. The prize reflects Zewail's belief that scientific and technological advancement are crucial for the future development of Egypt and the Middle East. Zewail served as the jury president for the L'Oreal-UNESCO award for women in science in 2007. That year, he also joined the advisory boards of Egypt's Supreme Council for Science and Technology, the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, and the Arab American National Museum.

Egypt has recognized Zewail's contributions to science by awarding him its highest honor, the Order of the Grand Collar of the Nile in 1999. Zewail appeared on Egyptian stamps in 1998 and 1999. He has also received the Benjamin Franklin Medal (1998), the Robert A. Welch Award (1997), and the Albert Einstein World Award (2006), among others.

Zewail has called on Arabs to regain their medieval pre-eminence in science and technology by investing in education and research. He has also advocated dialogue between the West and the Muslim world to promote mutual understanding and cooperation toward human and scientific progress. Zewail, whose professional affiliations include both Middle Eastern and American institutions, has exemplified this ideal of intellectual exchange.

Sonja Spear

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# Appendix



## SPEECH BY PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA, CAIRO, EGYPT JUNE 4, 2009

*Target of an anti-Muslim smear campaign during the 2008 presidential election, Democratic candidate Barack Obama, a professed Christian, constantly battled against the idea, spread by Internet rumor and some political operatives, that he was secretly a Muslim. Using the language of evangelical Christianity, he said that he believed in “Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior,” while others pointed to his long-standing membership in the United Church of Christ. In attempting to quell fears among the voting public that he would be a stealth Muslim president, he also maintained a studied distance from Muslim-American communities. Some Obama volunteers even asked some Muslim women wearing the hijab, or head scarf, at a June 2008 rally in Detroit to avoid being photographed with the candidate. Though the Obama campaign apologized for the act and some Muslim Americans complained about the ways in which they were being ignored by Obama, most Muslim Americans, well aware of the prejudices that Obama faced as the grandson of Kenyan Muslims and American Christians, took his campaign strategy in stride. In the end, according to one poll, approximately 90 percent of Muslim Americans voted for Obama, who won the election in November 2008.*

*Uniquely qualified to address the growing rift between the Muslim world and the United States, President Obama was far more open about the Muslim heritage of his father’s family after being elected. Meeting leaders from Muslim nations, Obama greeted them with a traditional Islamic greeting, “Salam ‘Alaykum” or “peace be to you.” Addressing the Turkish parliament on April 6, 2009, Obama outlined his intention to work with Muslims toward common goals and interests, acknowledging his own connections to the Muslim community. Then, in a widely anticipated speech on June 4, 2009, at Cairo University in Cairo, Egypt, President Obama outlined his approach to repairing the damaged relation-*

*ships between Muslims abroad and the United States. In preparing for the speech, the White House consulted with a large number of national security analysts, international affairs commentators, and Muslim-American business leaders and academics. Obama’s remarks, which were translated into 13 different languages, were warmly received by people all around the world, though some critics noted that the speech announced no new policy proposals. In his speech, for which he received a standing ovation, Obama voiced the grievances of Muslims—from the U.S. role in the overthrow of the Iranian prime minister in 1953 to the ongoing suffering of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Admitting to what he called past mistakes while also defending the essential goodness and interests of the United States, Barack Hussein Obama, as he referred to himself in the speech, also praised the role of Muslim Americans in the making of American culture and society and proposed to begin anew America’s relationship with Muslims in Africa, Asia, and Europe.*



Thank you very much. Good afternoon. I am honored to be in the timeless city of Cairo, and to be hosted by two remarkable institutions. For over a thousand years, Al-Azhar has stood as a beacon of Islamic learning; and for over a century, Cairo University has been a source of Egypt’s advancement. And together, you represent the harmony between tradition and progress. I’m grateful for your hospitality, and the hospitality of the people of Egypt. And I’m also proud to carry with me the goodwill of the American people, and a greeting of peace from Muslim communities in my country: *Assalaamu alaykum*.

We meet at a time of great tension between the United States and Muslims around the world—tension rooted in historical forces that go beyond any current policy debate. The relationship between Islam and the West includes centuries

of coexistence and cooperation, but also conflict and religious wars. More recently, tension has been fed by colonialism that denied rights and opportunities to many Muslims, and a Cold War in which Muslim-majority countries were too often treated as proxies without regard to their own aspirations. Moreover, the sweeping change brought by modernity and globalization led many Muslims to view the West as hostile to the traditions of Islam.

Violent extremists have exploited these tensions in a small but potent minority of Muslims. The attacks of September 11, 2001, and the continued efforts of these extremists to engage in violence against civilians has led some in my country to view Islam as inevitably hostile not only to America and Western countries, but also to human rights. All this has bred more fear and more mistrust.

So long as our relationship is defined by our differences, we will empower those who sow hatred rather than peace, those who promote conflict rather than the cooperation that can help all of our people achieve justice and prosperity. And this cycle of suspicion and discord must end.

I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles—principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings.

I do so recognizing that change cannot happen overnight. I know there's been a lot of publicity about this speech, but no single speech can eradicate years of mistrust, nor can I answer in the time that I have this afternoon all the complex questions that brought us to this point. But I am convinced that in order to move forward, we must say openly to each other the things we hold in our hearts and that too often are said only behind closed doors. There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other; to learn from each other; to respect one another; and to seek common ground. As the Holy Koran tells us, "Be conscious of God and speak always the truth." That is what I will try to do today—to speak the truth as best I can, humbled by the task before us, and firm in my belief that the interests we share as human beings are far more powerful than the forces that drive us apart.

Now part of this conviction is rooted in my own experience. I'm a Christian, but my father came from a Kenyan family that includes generations of Muslims. As a boy, I spent several years in Indonesia and heard the call of the *azaan* at the break of dawn and at the fall of dusk. As a young man, I worked in Chicago communities where many found dignity and peace in their Muslim faith.

As a student of history, I also know civilization's debt to Islam. It was Islam—at places like Al-Azhar—that carried the

light of learning through so many centuries, paving the way for Europe's Renaissance and Enlightenment. It was innovation in Muslim communities—it was innovation in Muslim communities that developed the order of algebra; our magnetic compass and tools of navigation; our mastery of pens and printing; our understanding of how disease spreads and how it can be healed. Islamic culture has given us majestic arches and soaring spires; timeless poetry and cherished music; elegant calligraphy and places of peaceful contemplation. And throughout history, Islam has demonstrated through words and deeds the possibilities of religious tolerance and racial equality.

I also know that Islam has always been a part of America's story. The first nation to recognize my country was Morocco. In signing the Treaty of Tripoli in 1796, our second President, John Adams, wrote, "The United States has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion or tranquility of Muslims." And since our founding, American Muslims have enriched the United States. They have fought in our wars, they have served in our government, they have stood for civil rights, they have started businesses, they have taught at our universities, they've excelled in our sports arenas, they've won Nobel Prizes, built our tallest building, and lit the Olympic Torch. And when the first Muslim American was recently elected to Congress, he took the oath to defend our Constitution using the same Holy Koran that one of our Founding Fathers—Thomas Jefferson—kept in his personal library.

So I have known Islam on three continents before coming to the region where it was first revealed. That experience guides my conviction that partnership between America and Islam must be based on what Islam is, not what it isn't. And I consider it part of my responsibility as President of the United States to fight against negative stereotypes of Islam wherever they appear.

But that same principle must apply to Muslim perceptions of America. Just as Muslims do not fit a crude stereotype, America is not the crude stereotype of a self-interested empire. The United States has been one of the greatest sources of progress that the world has ever known. We were born out of revolution against an empire. We were founded upon the ideal that all are created equal, and we have shed blood and struggled for centuries to give meaning to those words—within our borders, and around the world. We are shaped by every culture, drawn from every end of the Earth, and dedicated to a simple concept: *E pluribus unum*—"Out of many, one."

Now, much has been made of the fact that an African American with the name Barack Hussein Obama could be elected President. But my personal story is not so unique. The dream of opportunity for all people has not come true for everyone in America, but its promise exists for all who

come to our shores—and that includes nearly 7 million American Muslims in our country today who, by the way, enjoy incomes and educational levels that are higher than the American average.

Moreover, freedom in America is indivisible from the freedom to practice one's religion. That is why there is a mosque in every state in our union, and over 1,200 mosques within our borders. That's why the United States government has gone to court to protect the right of women and girls to wear the hijab and to punish those who would deny it.

So let there be no doubt: Islam is a part of America. And I believe that America holds within her the truth that regardless of race, religion, or station in life, all of us share common aspirations—to live in peace and security; to get an education and to work with dignity; to love our families, our communities, and our God. These things we share. This is the hope of all humanity.

Of course, recognizing our common humanity is only the beginning of our task. Words alone cannot meet the needs of our people. These needs will be met only if we act boldly in the years ahead; and if we understand that the challenges we face are shared, and our failure to meet them will hurt us all.

For we have learned from recent experience that when a financial system weakens in one country, prosperity is hurt everywhere. When a new flu infects one human being, all are at risk. When one nation pursues a nuclear weapon, the risk of nuclear attack rises for all nations. When violent extremists operate in one stretch of mountains, people are endangered across an ocean. When innocents in Bosnia and Darfur are slaughtered, that is a stain on our collective conscience. That is what it means to share this world in the 21st century. That is the responsibility we have to one another as human beings.

And this is a difficult responsibility to embrace. For human history has often been a record of nations and tribes—and, yes, religions—subjugating one another in pursuit of their own interests. Yet in this new age, such attitudes are self-defeating. Given our interdependence, any world order that elevates one nation or group of people over another will inevitably fail. So whatever we think of the past, we must not be prisoners to it. Our problems must be dealt with through partnership; our progress must be shared.

Now, that does not mean we should ignore sources of tension. Indeed, it suggests the opposite: We must face these tensions squarely. And so in that spirit, let me speak as clearly and as plainly as I can about some specific issues that I believe we must finally confront together.

The first issue that we have to confront is violent extremism in all of its forms.

In Ankara, I made clear that America is not—and never will be—at war with Islam. We will, however, relentlessly confront violent extremists who pose a grave threat to our

security—because we reject the same thing that people of all faiths reject: the killing of innocent men, women, and children. And it is my first duty as President to protect the American people.

The situation in Afghanistan demonstrates America's goals, and our need to work together. Over seven years ago, the United States pursued al Qaeda and the Taliban with broad international support. We did not go by choice; we went because of necessity. I'm aware that there's still some who would question or even justify the events of 9/11. But let us be clear: Al Qaeda killed nearly 3,000 people on that day. The victims were innocent men, women and children from America and many other nations who had done nothing to harm anybody. And yet al Qaeda chose to ruthlessly murder these people, claimed credit for the attack, and even now states their determination to kill on a massive scale. They have affiliates in many countries and are trying to expand their reach. These are not opinions to be debated; these are facts to be dealt with.

Now, make no mistake: We do not want to keep our troops in Afghanistan. We see no military—we seek no military bases there. It is agonizing for America to lose our young men and women. It is costly and politically difficult to continue this conflict. We would gladly bring every single one of our troops home if we could be confident that there were not violent extremists in Afghanistan and now Pakistan determined to kill as many Americans as they possibly can. But that is not yet the case.

And that's why we're partnering with a coalition of 46 countries. And despite the costs involved, America's commitment will not weaken. Indeed, none of us should tolerate these extremists. They have killed in many countries. They have killed people of different faiths—but more than any other, they have killed Muslims. Their actions are irreconcilable with the rights of human beings, the progress of nations, and with Islam. The Holy Koran teaches that whoever kills an innocent is as—it is as if he has killed all mankind. And the Holy Koran also says whoever saves a person, it is as if he has saved all mankind. The enduring faith of over a billion people is so much bigger than the narrow hatred of a few. Islam is not part of the problem in combating violent extremism—it is an important part of promoting peace.

Now, we also know that military power alone is not going to solve the problems in Afghanistan and Pakistan. That's why we plan to invest \$1.5 billion each year over the next five years to partner with Pakistanis to build schools and hospitals, roads and businesses, and hundreds of millions to help those who've been displaced. That's why we are providing more than \$2.8 billion to help Afghans develop their economy and deliver services that people depend on.

Let me also address the issue of Iraq. Unlike Afghanistan, Iraq was a war of choice that provoked strong differences in



my country and around the world. Although I believe that the Iraqi people are ultimately better off without the tyranny of Saddam Hussein, I also believe that events in Iraq have reminded America of the need to use diplomacy and build international consensus to resolve our problems whenever possible. Indeed, we can recall the words of Thomas Jefferson, who said: "I hope that our wisdom will grow with our power, and teach us that the less we use our power the greater it will be."

Today, America has a dual responsibility: to help Iraq forge a better future—and to leave Iraq to Iraqis. And I have made it clear to the Iraqi people—I have made it clear to the Iraqi people that we pursue no bases, and no claim on their territory or resources. Iraq's sovereignty is its own. And that's why I ordered the removal of our combat brigades by next August. That is why we will honor our agreement with Iraq's democratically elected government to remove combat troops from Iraqi cities by July, and to remove all of our troops from Iraq by 2012. We will help Iraq train its security forces and develop its economy. But we will support a secure and united Iraq as a partner, and never as a patron.

And finally, just as America can never tolerate violence by extremists, we must never alter or forget our principles. Nine-eleven was an enormous trauma to our country. The fear and anger that it provoked was understandable, but in some cases, it led us to act contrary to our traditions and our ideals. We are taking concrete actions to change course. I have unequivocally prohibited the use of torture by the United States, and I have ordered the prison at Guantánamo Bay closed by early next year.

So America will defend itself, respectful of the sovereignty of nations and the rule of law. And we will do so in partnership with Muslim communities which are also threatened. The sooner the extremists are isolated and unwelcome in Muslim communities, the sooner we will all be safer.

The second major source of tension that we need to discuss is the situation between Israelis, Palestinians and the Arab world.

America's strong bonds with Israel are well known. This bond is unbreakable. It is based upon cultural and historical ties, and the recognition that the aspiration for a Jewish homeland is rooted in a tragic history that cannot be denied.

Around the world, the Jewish people were persecuted for centuries, and anti-Semitism in Europe culminated in an unprecedented Holocaust. Tomorrow, I will visit Buchenwald, which was part of a network of camps where Jews were enslaved, tortured, shot and gassed to death by the Third Reich. Six million Jews were killed—more than the entire Jewish population of Israel today. Denying that fact is baseless, it is ignorant, and it is hateful. Threatening Israel with destruction—or repeating vile stereotypes about Jews—is deeply wrong, and only serves to evoke in the minds of

Israelis this most painful of memories while preventing the peace that the people of this region deserve.

On the other hand, it is also undeniable that the Palestinian people—Muslims and Christians—have suffered in pursuit of a homeland. For more than 60 years they've endured the pain of dislocation. Many wait in refugee camps in the West Bank, Gaza, and neighboring lands for a life of peace and security that they have never been able to lead. They endure the daily humiliations—large and small—that come with occupation. So let there be no doubt: The situation for the Palestinian people is intolerable. And America will not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity, and a state of their own.

For decades then, there has been a stalemate: two peoples with legitimate aspirations, each with a painful history that makes compromise elusive. It's easy to point fingers—for Palestinians to point to the displacement brought about by Israel's founding, and for Israelis to point to the constant hostility and attacks throughout its history from within its borders as well as beyond. But if we see this conflict only from one side or the other, then we will be blind to the truth: The only resolution is for the aspirations of both sides to be met through two states, where Israelis and Palestinians each live in peace and security.

That is in Israel's interest, Palestine's interest, America's interest, and the world's interest. And that is why I intend to personally pursue this outcome with all the patience and dedication that the task requires. The obligations—the obligations that the parties have agreed to under the road map are clear. For peace to come, it is time for them—and all of us—to live up to our responsibilities.

Palestinians must abandon violence. Resistance through violence and killing is wrong and it does not succeed. For centuries, black people in America suffered the lash of the whip as slaves and the humiliation of segregation. But it was not violence that won full and equal rights. It was a peaceful and determined insistence upon the ideals at the center of America's founding. This same story can be told by people from South Africa to South Asia; from Eastern Europe to Indonesia. It's a story with a simple truth: that violence is a dead end. It is a sign neither of courage nor power to shoot rockets at sleeping children, or to blow up old women on a bus. That's not how moral authority is claimed; that's how it is surrendered.

Now is the time for Palestinians to focus on what they can build. The Palestinian Authority must develop its capacity to govern, with institutions that serve the needs of its people. Hamas does have support among some Palestinians, but they also have to recognize they have responsibilities. To play a role in fulfilling Palestinian aspirations, to unify the Palestinian people, Hamas must put an end to violence, recognize past agreements, recognize Israel's right to exist.

At the same time, Israelis must acknowledge that just as Israel's right to exist cannot be denied, neither can Palestine's. The United States does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements. This construction violates previous agreements and undermines efforts to achieve peace. It is time for these settlements to stop.

And Israel must also live up to its obligation to ensure that Palestinians can live and work and develop their society. Just as it devastates Palestinian families, the continuing humanitarian crisis in Gaza does not serve Israel's security; neither does the continuing lack of opportunity in the West Bank. Progress in the daily lives of the Palestinian people must be a critical part of a road to peace, and Israel must take concrete steps to enable such progress.

And finally, the Arab states must recognize that the Arab Peace Initiative was an important beginning, but not the end of their responsibilities. The Arab-Israeli conflict should no longer be used to distract the people of Arab nations from other problems. Instead, it must be a cause for action to help the Palestinian people develop the institutions that will sustain their state, to recognize Israel's legitimacy, and to choose progress over a self-defeating focus on the past.

America will align our policies with those who pursue peace, and we will say in public what we say in private to Israelis and Palestinians and Arabs. We cannot impose peace. But privately, many Muslims recognize that Israel will not go away. Likewise, many Israelis recognize the need for a Palestinian state. It is time for us to act on what everyone knows to be true.

Too many tears have been shed. Too much blood has been shed. All of us have a responsibility to work for the day when the mothers of Israelis and Palestinians can see their children grow up without fear; when the Holy Land of the three great faiths is the place of peace that God intended it to be; when Jerusalem is a secure and lasting home for Jews and Christians and Muslims, and a place for all of the children of Abraham to mingle peacefully together as in the story of Isra—as in the story of Isra, when Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, peace be upon them, joined in prayer.

The third source of tension is our shared interest in the rights and responsibilities of nations on nuclear weapons.

This issue has been a source of tension between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran. For many years, Iran has defined itself in part by its opposition to my country, and there is in fact a tumultuous history between us. In the middle of the Cold War, the United States played a role in the overthrow of a democratically elected Iranian government. Since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has played a role in acts of hostage-taking and violence against U.S. troops and civilians. This history is well known. Rather than remain trapped in the past, I've made it clear to Iran's leaders and people that my country is prepared to move forward. The

question now is not what Iran is against, but rather what future it wants to build.

I recognize it will be hard to overcome decades of mistrust, but we will proceed with courage, rectitude, and resolve. There will be many issues to discuss between our two countries, and we are willing to move forward without preconditions on the basis of mutual respect. But it is clear to all concerned that when it comes to nuclear weapons, we have reached a decisive point. This is not simply about America's interests. It's about preventing a nuclear arms race in the Middle East that could lead this region and the world down a hugely dangerous path.

I understand those who protest that some countries have weapons that others do not. No single nation should pick and choose which nation holds nuclear weapons. And that's why I strongly reaffirmed America's commitment to seek a world in which no nations hold nuclear weapons. And any nation—including Iran—should have the right to access peaceful nuclear power if it complies with its responsibilities under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. That commitment is at the core of the treaty, and it must be kept for all who fully abide by it. And I'm hopeful that all countries in the region can share in this goal.

The fourth issue that I will address is democracy.

I know—I know there has been controversy about the promotion of democracy in recent years, and much of this controversy is connected to the war in Iraq. So let me be clear: No system of government can or should be imposed by one nation by any other.

That does not lessen my commitment, however, to governments that reflect the will of the people. Each nation gives life to this principle in its own way, grounded in the traditions of its own people. America does not presume to know what is best for everyone, just as we would not presume to pick the outcome of a peaceful election. But I do have an unyielding belief that all people yearn for certain things: the ability to speak your mind and have a say in how you are governed; confidence in the rule of law and the equal administration of justice; government that is transparent and doesn't steal from the people; the freedom to live as you choose. These are not just American ideas; they are human rights. And that is why we will support them everywhere.

Now, there is no straight line to realize this promise. But this much is clear: Governments that protect these rights are ultimately more stable, successful and secure. Suppressing ideas never succeeds in making them go away. America respects the right of all peaceful and law-abiding voices to be heard around the world, even if we disagree with them. And we will welcome all elected, peaceful governments—provided they govern with respect for all their people.

This last point is important because there are some who advocate for democracy only when they're out of power;

once in power, they are ruthless in suppressing the rights of others. So no matter where it takes hold, government of the people and by the people sets a single standard for all who would hold power: You must maintain your power through consent, not coercion; you must respect the rights of minorities, and participate with a spirit of tolerance and compromise; you must place the interests of your people and the legitimate workings of the political process above your party. Without these ingredients, elections alone do not make true democracy.

The fifth issue that we must address together is religious freedom.

Islam has a proud tradition of tolerance. We see it in the history of Andalusia and Cordoba during the Inquisition. I saw it firsthand as a child in Indonesia, where devout Christians worshiped freely in an overwhelmingly Muslim country. That is the spirit we need today. People in every country should be free to choose and live their faith based upon the persuasion of the mind and the heart and the soul. This tolerance is essential for religion to thrive, but it's being challenged in many different ways.

Among some Muslims, there's a disturbing tendency to measure one's own faith by the rejection of somebody else's faith. The richness of religious diversity must be upheld—whether it is for Maronites in Lebanon or the Copts in Egypt. And if we are being honest, fault lines must be closed among Muslims, as well, as the divisions between Sunni and Shia have led to tragic violence, particularly in Iraq.

Freedom of religion is central to the ability of peoples to live together. We must always examine the ways in which we protect it. For instance, in the United States, rules on charitable giving have made it harder for Muslims to fulfill their religious obligation. That's why I'm committed to working with American Muslims to ensure that they can fulfill zakat.

Likewise, it is important for Western countries to avoid impeding Muslim citizens from practicing religion as they see fit—for instance, by dictating what clothes a Muslim woman should wear. We can't disguise hostility towards any religion behind the pretence of liberalism.

In fact, faith should bring us together. And that's why we're forging service projects in America to bring together Christians, Muslims, and Jews. That's why we welcome efforts like Saudi Arabian King Abdullah's interfaith dialogue and Turkey's leadership in the Alliance of Civilizations. Around the world, we can turn dialogue into interfaith service, so bridges between peoples lead to action—whether it is combating malaria in Africa, or providing relief after a natural disaster.

The sixth issue—the sixth issue that I want to address is women's rights. I know—I know—and you can tell from this audience, that there is a healthy debate about this issue. I reject the view of some in the West that a woman who chooses

to cover her hair is somehow less equal, but I do believe that a woman who is denied an education is denied equality. And it is no coincidence that countries where women are well educated are far more likely to be prosperous.

Now, let me be clear: Issues of women's equality are by no means simply an issue for Islam. In Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, we've seen Muslim-majority countries elect a woman to lead. Meanwhile, the struggle for women's equality continues in many aspects of American life, and in countries around the world.

I am convinced that our daughters can contribute just as much to society as our sons. Our common prosperity will be advanced by allowing all humanity—men and women—to reach their full potential. I do not believe that women must make the same choices as men in order to be equal, and I respect those women who choose to live their lives in traditional roles. But it should be their choice. And that is why the United States will partner with any Muslim-majority country to support expanded literacy for girls, and to help young women pursue employment through micro-financing that helps people live their dreams.

Finally, I want to discuss economic development and opportunity.

I know that for many, the face of globalization is contradictory. The Internet and television can bring knowledge and information, but also offensive sexuality and mindless violence into the home. Trade can bring new wealth and opportunities, but also huge disruptions and change in communities. In all nations—including America—this change can bring fear. Fear that because of modernity we lose control over our economic choices, our politics, and most importantly our identities—those things we most cherish about our communities, our families, our traditions, and our faith.

But I also know that human progress cannot be denied. There need not be contradictions between development and tradition. Countries like Japan and South Korea grew their economies enormously while maintaining distinct cultures. The same is true for the astonishing progress within Muslim-majority countries from Kuala Lumpur to Dubai. In ancient times and in our times, Muslim communities have been at the forefront of innovation and education.

And this is important because no development strategy can be based only upon what comes out of the ground, nor can it be sustained while young people are out of work. Many Gulf states have enjoyed great wealth as a consequence of oil, and some are beginning to focus it on broader development. But all of us must recognize that education and innovation will be the currency of the 21st century—and in too many Muslim communities, there remains underinvestment in these areas. I'm emphasizing such investment within my own country. And while America in the past has focused on oil

and gas when it comes to this part of the world, we now seek a broader engagement.

On education, we will expand exchange programs, and increase scholarships, like the one that brought my father to America. At the same time, we will encourage more Americans to study in Muslim communities. And we will match promising Muslim students with internships in America; invest in online learning for teachers and children around the world; and create a new online network, so a young person in Kansas can communicate instantly with a young person in Cairo.

On economic development, we will create a new corps of business volunteers to partner with counterparts in Muslim-majority countries. And I will host a Summit on Entrepreneurship this year to identify how we can deepen ties between business leaders, foundations and social entrepreneurs in the United States and Muslim communities around the world.

On science and technology, we will launch a new fund to support technological development in Muslim-majority countries, and to help transfer ideas to the marketplace so they can create more jobs. We'll open centers of scientific excellence in Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, and appoint new science envoys to collaborate on programs that develop new sources of energy, create green jobs, digitize records, clean water, grow new crops. Today I'm announcing a new global effort with the Organization of the Islamic Conference to eradicate polio. And we will also expand partnerships with Muslim communities to promote child and maternal health.

All these things must be done in partnership. Americans are ready to join with citizens and governments; community organizations, religious leaders, and businesses in Muslim communities around the world to help our people pursue a better life.

The issues that I have described will not be easy to address. But we have a responsibility to join together on behalf of the world that we seek—a world where extremists no longer threaten our people, and American troops have come home; a world where Israelis and Palestinians are each secure in a state of their own, and nuclear energy is used for peaceful purposes; a world where governments serve their citizens, and the rights of all God's children are respected. Those are mutual interests. That is the world we seek. But we can only achieve it together.

I know there are many—Muslim and non-Muslim—who question whether we can forge this new beginning. Some are

eager to stoke the flames of division, and to stand in the way of progress. Some suggest that it isn't worth the effort—that we are fated to disagree, and civilizations are doomed to clash. Many more are simply skeptical that real change can occur. There's so much fear, so much mistrust that has built up over the years. But if we choose to be bound by the past, we will never move forward. And I want to particularly say this to young people of every faith, in every country—you, more than anyone, have the ability to reimagine the world, to remake this world.

All of us share this world for but a brief moment in time. The question is whether we spend that time focused on what pushes us apart, or whether we commit ourselves to an effort—a sustained effort—to find common ground, to focus on the future we seek for our children, and to respect the dignity of all human beings.

It's easier to start wars than to end them. It's easier to blame others than to look inward. It's easier to see what is different about someone than to find the things we share. But we should choose the right path, not just the easy path. There's one rule that lies at the heart of every religion—that we do unto others as we would have them do unto us. This truth transcends nations and peoples—a belief that isn't new; that isn't black or white or brown; that isn't Christian or Muslim or Jew. It's a belief that pulsed in the cradle of civilization, and that still beats in the hearts of billions around the world. It's a faith in other people, and it's what brought me here today.

We have the power to make the world we seek, but only if we have the courage to make a new beginning, keeping in mind what has been written.

The Holy Koran tells us: "O mankind! We have created you male and a female; and we have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another."

The Talmud tells us: "The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace."

The Holy Bible tells us: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

The people of the world can live together in peace. We know that is God's vision. Now that must be our work here on Earth.

Thank you. And may God's peace be upon you. Thank you very much. Thank you.





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